They shall
abundantly utter
the memory of
Thy Great
Goodness.

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THE STORY

OF THE

CHINA INLAND MISSION.

THE STORY

OF THE

CHINA INLAND MISSION.

BY

M. GERALDINE GUINNESS,

AUTHOR OF "IN THE FAR EAST," EDITED BY HER SISTER.

With an Introduction by

J. HUDSON TAYLOR, M.R.C.S., F.R.G.S.

In Two Volumes.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

TWELVE months ago, when the first volume of this book made its appearance, it was intended that the second should quickly follow. Serious illness and slow convalescence, by which I was for a long time disabled, have prevented this. And sincere thanks are due to many who have patiently waited throughout the year until the work could be completed. Now, upon the eve of my return to China, it is sent forth with the prayerful and earnest hope that GOD, Who from the lips of babes can perfect praise, will use it to His own glory.

The story of such a Mission—as of every movement that is of Him—is a story without an end. So much has been omitted from this book, in order to bring it within necessary limitations, that to those who read between the lines it will seem sadly incomplete. In regretting many an omission, they have the author's fullest sympathy.

When a large number of facts and dates are dealt with, it is difficult to attain perfect accuracy. Cor-

1850 3

rections and suggestions will be thankfully welcomed and much appreciated.

One pleasant duty remains in connection with the loved task now laid down. No small part of the blessing that has come to me personally through this book has been due to the generous sympathy and invaluable aid of many a fellow-worker. Amongst these, none has been more helpful than my own beloved sister—the Editor of *Regions Beyond*—who has given weeks of ungrudging toil to this volume, and whose able and practised pen has not a little brightened and enriched its pages.

Knowing all, the Master says—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these . . . ye have done it unto Me."

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PROGRESS AND THE REGIONS BEYOND.

"Take your Bible, and carefully count, not the chapters or verses, but the *letters* from the beginning of Genesis to the 'Amen' of the Revelation; and when you have accomplished the task, go over it again and again and again—ten times, twenty times, forty times—nay, you must read the very letters of your Bible *eighty times over* before you have reached the requisite sum. It would take something like the letters of eighty Bibles to represent the men, women, and children of that old and wondrous Empire of China. Fourteen hundred of them have sunk into Christless graves during the last hour; thirty-three thousand will pass to-day for ever beyond your reach. Dispatch your missionary to-morrow, and one million and a quarter of immortal souls, for whom CHRIST died, will have passed to their final account before he can reach their shores. Whether such facts touch us or not, I think they ought to move our hearts. It is enough to make an angel weep."—REV. SILVESTER WHITEHEAD.

CHAPTER I.

TWENTY YEARS AGO.

WE stand upon the threshold of 1873—a second stage of our journey lying before us. Seven years have elapsed since the good ship *Lammermuir* launched the first party of the newly formed Inland Mission upon its untried way. Theirs was a venture of faith, but, as we have seen, faith that was justified and rewarded. And now that pioneer band has grown into a company of more than thirty men and women settled in no fewer than sixteen Chinese cities, of which twelve before their coming had been utterly unreached by the Gospel.

They are richer in experience, these workers, than they were; richer in knowledge of GOD, in patience, and in hope. Their tears have fallen over distant graves, and their hearts have been disciplined by many a difficulty and sorrow. But it has been theirs, too, to rejoice over blessing given, and an entrance won for CHRIST into many darkened lives.

After an absence from China of just a year, Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Taylor are once again upon their outward way. The Council recently formed at home

is thus left in full charge of its new responsibilities, evidently no sinecure; for all the funds Mr. Taylor was able to hand over to them upon his departure amounted to the modest sum of £21 2*s.* 8*d.*

And now, while the outgoing party are steadily traversing tropical seas to the land of their longing, let us imagine ourselves raised to some lofty eminence, far in the heart of China, from which we may take a bird's-eye view of the position of that great country and people in relation to the important questions with which we shall have to deal in following out the story of the next twenty years.

* * * * * *

Twelve years have already elapsed since the Treaty of Pekin, closing a disastrous campaign, forced China into regular diplomatic relations with the outside world.* Before that time foreigners were only allowed a footing at the five ports opened in 1842, and China still held aloof from the great family of nations. But when, in 1860, the Treaty of Pekin stipulated for the residence of European and American ambassadors at her Imperial court on terms of fullest equality, the dawn of a new era had begun.

From that time this million-peopled Empire was destined to be drawn into ever closer contact with professedly Christian powers. How important for her, and for them, the far-reaching consequences, for good or ill! These we do not purpose to trace.

* Vol i., p. 42.

Indeed, it still remains a problem what the future is to be of China's intercourse with other lands. Given a fair chance, freed from the opium-curse and enlightened by the Gospel, what is there to which her intelligent, hardworking, skilful people might not attain? But, for the present, facts of the past are our province, not future possibilities.

On the threshold of 1873 twelve years of this new relationship were already gone. What had been their story, politically, and from a missionary point of view?

When the allied forces retired from Pekin after the campaign of 1860, leaving China with her military routed, her defences taken, her resources crippled, and the pride and flower of her army lying dead in heaps around her abandoned forts; with the Emperor, Hien-fung, a fugitive from the capital, and his magnificent summer palace a pile of blackened ruins, the outlook was dark indeed for the bewildered statesman who had to assume the reins of government.

Hien-fung, a weak and unfortunate monarch, could do nothing to meet the emergency. He never returned to the capital; and within a year he died, leaving his distracted country to his little six-year-old son, and the regency of his brother Prince Kung, and the Dowager Empresses. His reign had been a failure. Lacking the strength and decision of his father, Tao-kwang, he had succeeded to the throne in turbulent times. Never had the Empire needed a

firm hand more. Rarely had the reins been held so slackly. But in Prince Kung, now thirty years of age, the people found a ruler as marked for force of character and ability as his Imperial brother had been for incapacity.

"Appearing when the capital was surrendered to the allies, he bore the brunt of that unpleasant task, signing the treaties, and undertook almost alone the management of affairs with foreigners, while the Government was recovering from its paralysis of defeat." *

By a shrewd *coup d'état* he succeeded in extinguishing a powerful conspiracy of the ministerial war-party, and enthroning the young prince "Happy Omen." And four years later, in 1865, his steady rule, with the help of the "Ever Victorious Force," under the noble leadership of Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon, had quelled the T'ai-p'ing rebellion. Such ability was the supreme need of China at that hour. With it she quickly recovered balance, and was able to cope successfully with the wide-spread Mohammedan rebellion in the west, thus ending, in 1873, the internal upheavals of the country.

The remarkable vitality and resources of the nation were never more noticeable than in this serious crisis. "To the ordinary outlays of the Empire," writes Dr. Wells Williams, "were superadded the immense burdens of a foreign invasion just concluded,

* *The Middle Kingdom*, Dr. Wells Williams, vol. ii., p. 691.

and a terrible struggle with domestic enemies; yet neither the Regent nor his colleagues appear during this period of stress to have lost a particle of their confidence in the loyalty of the people. Through loss or gain, failure of material or resource, treachery in palace or camp, abuse or assistance from foreigners, this faith in one another failed not. The face of China in 1865 was perhaps as wretched as that of Central Europe after the peace of Westphalia; indeed, a more general desolation could hardly be imagined. Nevertheless the rapidity with which its inhabitants not only resumed their occupations as best they could, but rebuilt dwellings and re-organised trade, startled even their habitual disparagers into praise, and testified to the marvellous recuperative powers of this much-despised civilisation."

In February 1873 the young Emperor Tung-chĭ came of age, and assumed the government; and the spring of that year saw "the last struggle of Chinese seclusion to resist the incoming wave of western power." This battle was fought out in the social sphere. March, April, May, and June at Pekin were filled with a weary series of ministerial and Imperial conferences, correspondences, and delays, *à propos* of the time immemorial *Koh-t'eo* to the Emperor. Chinese ceremonial requires that the latter, as the representative of Divine power, be honoured with the same prostration as that paid to the gods. Ceremonies performed in his presence are not mere etiquette, to be altered according to circumstances, but partake

of a religious character; and to omit the supreme obeisance of the *Koh-t'eo*, the climax of laudation and worship,—kneeling and knocking the head three times on the ground, and rising and kneeling again to repeat the action thrice over, is equivalent in Chinese thought to the rejection of the joint authority of the Emperor and of Heaven. Of course no European minister would condescend to the *Koh-t'eo*, and no European minister, consequently, had ever been received by Chinese royalty. The accession audience question was worn threadbare as the months went by, the Imperial ministers putting off the inevitable with endless arguments and excuses, the foreign embassies urging and demanding a proper settlement at the earliest possible date. Prince Kung and his colleagues took a month to discuss the dilemma among themselves. Signs of yielding were apparent, and issued in an April Legation-interview. The old ground was gone over, further notes and protocols were exchanged in May, and at last, on June 29th, the embarrassments found their *finale* when the Emperor received the Japanese ambassador by himself, and immediately afterwards the five ministers of Russia, the United States, Great Britain, France, and Holland, accompanied only by the German Secretary, who acted as interpreter.

The scene was deeply significant.

"Against what tremendous odds of superstition and national prejudice the officials were pitted in this curious contest, those who have never lived in

the Empire can hardly appreciate."* But new influences were at work, rapidly breaking down the old ideas and safeguards, and that June day, when the boy-monarch—only sixteen at his marriage, and seventeen at his accession †—acknowledged the equality and independence of foreign nations, probably as great an advance had been made in the opening of China as this century has seen.

Such, in brief, were the main political events of the twelve years under review. From a missionary standpoint this period had been fully as critical and important.

At the time of the Treaty of Pekin missionary efforts, although fruitful and increasing, were still rigidly confined to the five centres in which foreigners were allowed to reside. But, in 1860, not only were seven other cities constituted free ports, along the coast and up the Yang-tsi, the capital itself was also rendered accessible to the representatives of other lands. Twenty Protestant Societies, with a staff of about one hundred missionaries, including ladies, were then in the field, and all these new centres were speedily occupied. But the China Inland Mission was as yet unborn.

Twelve years later, at the time of the commencement of this volume, twenty-eight Societies were repre-

* *The Middle Kingdom*, vol. ii., p. 715.

† Two years later Tung-chï died heirless, and his cousin, the present Emperor Kwang-su, then a child of four, succeeded under the same regency.

sented in China, occupying no less than thirty stations, with a staff of about two hundred and forty workers including the C. I. M. Several mission presses were at work, widely scattering Christian literature; eight thousand native converts were already gathered in the little churches; mission hospitals and schools were busy at the open ports; and a Mandarin version of the Bible, the sixth translation made within the century, was nearing completion. These years had witnessed great advance.

But still, far, far beyond the reach of all existing agencies, lay the vast interior, in hopeless heathen darkness—eleven great inland provinces, almost untouched by the Gospel. Several noble pioneering journeys had been made by missionaries of various Societies, an outline of whose itinerations is subjoined,* but in nine, at any rate, of those vast provinces, no one had ever attempted to settle among the people or commence permanent work.

The China Inland Mission, founded in 1865, was now seven years old. The story of its inauguration,

* The most remarkable of these journeys were, as follows:—

1864.—Dr. Williamson, to Eastern Mongolia.

1865.—Mr. Bagley, "to remote provinces."

1866.—Dr. Williamson and Mr. Lees to SHEN-SI, through SHAN-SI, returning *viâ* HO-NAN.

1867.—Mr. Johnson of B.S. to HO-NAN.

1868.—Mr. Wylie, and Dr. John, L.M.S., to SI-CH'UEN.

1868.—Mr. Oxenham, from Pekin to Hankow, through HO-NAN.

1870-72.—Mr. Mollman of B.S. in SHAN-SI.

and development up to this point, has been fully told in our first volume, and need only be alluded to here. After a brief absence in England Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Taylor were again upon their way to China, hoping to spend Christmas at Hang-chau. Early in December 1872 they reached their destination, and made their way once more to the old home on the Sin-k'ai Lung. Many changes had taken place since that very time six years before, when the first party of the Inland Mission arrived, homeless, in that great city, to find out the place the LORD had provided for them. Now the beloved Director and his wife were greeted by familiar faces, in scenes endeared to them by many memories, and were received at once into the midst of the well-loved little church that had been gathered by GOD'S blessing on their labours.

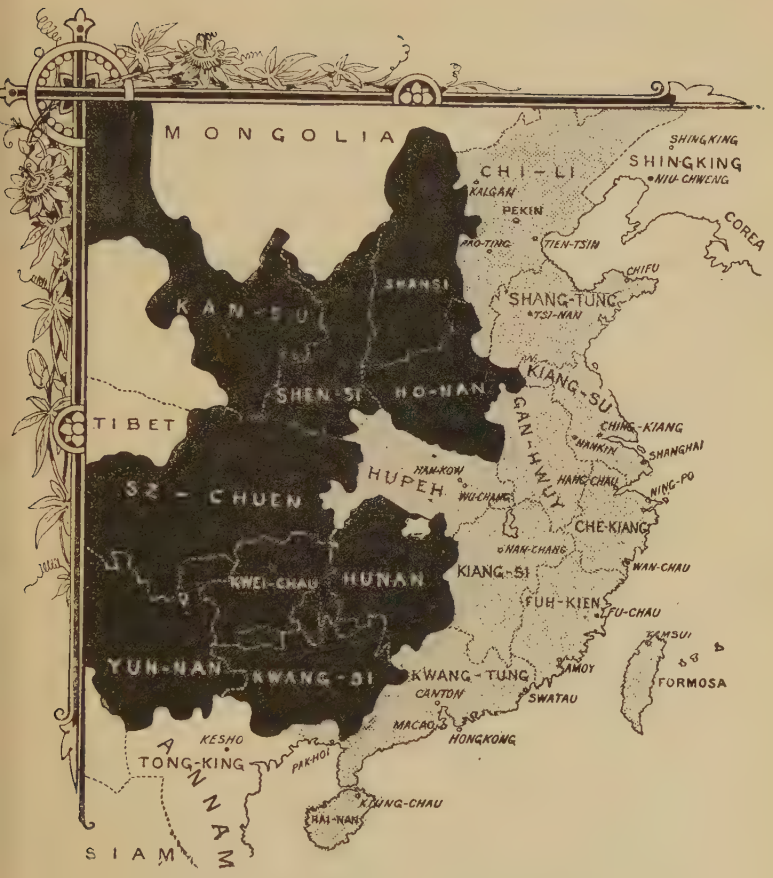
"It has been very pleasant," wrote Mr. Hudson Taylor, "to meet the native Christians here again. Tsiu Sien-seng is in Hang-chau just now, helping in the boys' school. We were talking the other day of the time when we first met in Ningpo, more than fifteen years ago, before Mr. Jones and myself had been cheered by our first baptism; and recalling the way by which the LORD has led us ever since, causing times of discouragement and adversity, to be followed by further developments of His gracious purposes, as winter is followed by spring. Together we remembered the gratitude with which we met, at the end of 1858, a little church of six native Christians beside ourselves; four of whom are still serving the LORD, while one has fallen asleep in JESUS, and one, alas! has gone back into the world. And looking round upon the stations and out-stations now

scattered over four provinces, and the helpers and native Christians engaged in this service, we were cheered and encouraged to hope still in GOD, and look for greater things than these. . . .

"The work here and in the out-stations is quietly but steadily progressing, and some of the helpers are manifestly growing in grace and efficiency. . . . The assistants from Hang-chau are so widely spread—some of them being three or four hundred miles apart—that it has become needful to adopt the plan of preparing a monthly news-letter, in the Romanised Ningpo dialect, giving accounts of the work, extracts from the correspondence of the native brethren, etc., in order that all may be informed of the proceedings of the church. A copy of this news-letter is sent to each station, and thus the brethren share each other's joys and trials, and the interests of each become the interest of all. Extracts are read also at meetings held in the various places, leading to more intelligent and sustained mutual prayer."

Prayer? Yes, for prayer was needed!

What was a total staff of two or three hundred workers of all societies among two to three hundred million heathen souls? Foreign arms and treaties had forced open the gates of the Empire of the East, and at a few scattered coast-towns and half-a-dozen points slightly inland, a handful of men and women were heralding the news of the redemption of the world, around them teeming thousands of densely ignorant and superstitious idolaters, thronging the crowded cities and thickly populated land. And beyond them? Beyond them lay in blank and absolute darkness the millions of the vast interior,



MAP SHOWING THE NINE UNEVANGELISED PROVINCES IN BLACK.

among whom not a single Protestant worker had ever lived and laboured to spread the Glad Tidings.

Oh, the unentered fields—the vast, unevangelised provinces of Inland China!

Oh, the cold hearts of Christendom, content to

celebrate their Christmas, and leave these innumerable souls in misery and sin!

On their knees, while half across the world the merry bells of Christmas rang out the Old Year and ushered in the New, should not that little band of workers in the Sin-k'ai Lung cry out to GOD for *these*?

CHAPTER II.

EARLY DAYS IN CHEH-KIANG.

HALFWAY down the long coast-line of China, bathed for over four thousand miles by the broad Pacific, lies the lovely province of CHEH-KIANG, birthplace and cradle of the China Inland Mission. Smallest among all the provinces of the empire, CHEH-KIANG is at the same time one of the most important. Populous, fertile, and healthy, rich in produce and manufactures, the energy and industry of its inhabitants are justly famed. Larger than the whole of Ireland, or Scotland and Wales put together, its great cities, densely peopled plains, and endless waterways teem with human life, and have long offered a wide field to missions. Here in the city of Ningpo, twelve miles from the sea, the first station of the Inland Mission was planted: and here, at Hang-chau, in the winter of 1866, the *Lammermuir* party found a home.

Politically, CHEH-KIANG is divided into eleven departments, each with its own capital; and these are subdivided into seventy-four counties, represented by as many district cities, and scores of lesser towns.

Before the commencement of the Inland Mission members of other Societies had long been labouring in Ningpo, and recently a footing had been gained in Hang-chau also, but the remainder of the province was unoccupied. Nine of the capital cities, and over seventy others—with populations varying from five to fifty thousand—were still without any missionary, not to mention all the rural districts that surrounded them.

Imagine Scotland and Wales, side by side, peopled with considerably more than double their present inhabitants, plunged into the depths of heathen darkness, with *just one mission station for each*, and, beyond that, no other light-centre among all their teeming millions!

Surrounded on all hands by conditions such as these, it was not long before the little band of workers in the Inland Mission began to think of extension. Ningpo and Hang-chau soon became a basis for wider operations, and in 1866-67 five of the remaining cities were added to the sphere of the Mission.

Before passing on to the larger developments of succeeding years, our attention is claimed by some of these first stations. Fung-hwa, Shao-hing, T'ai-chau, and Wun-chau are names that mean little outside China, but to us of the Inland Mission how much! Pioneering effort, amid dense heathen darkness, here and there a spark of light kindled amid the gloom, then long and patient toil crowned at last by rising day, as

hearts were one by one "illuminated."* In thought we see those simple men and women, hundreds of them, once "having no hope, and without GOD, in the world," but now rejoicing in the Light of Life. Is it not worth while pausing to ask how rose on them the Sun of Righteousness?

DAY DAWN IN T'AI-CHAU.

Southward from Ningpo stretches a rugged coast-line, broken by multitudinous creeks, bays, rocky headlands, and lovely islands. Inland the country is equally mountainous and beautiful; and a journey of about a hundred miles brings the traveller to the city of T'ai-chau, capital of a prefecture containing more than a million inhabitants.

In the summer of 1867 this prosperous and beautiful city was first visited with the Gospel by Messrs. Meadows and Jackson. They were followed by Mr. and Mrs. Rudland, who found there, in 1870, a promising little native church of six or seven members, besides several genuine inquirers. One of the native assistants, Tsiang Ah-liang, became specially helpful to them in the work, having the preaching of the Gospel deeply at heart.

His past had been a dark one. A wild and reckless life, bad enough when wholly heathen, had been still further vitiated when, on board a French man-of-war, he added to his own evil ways a knowledge of the wickedness of foreigners, and learned to blaspheme GOD in the language spoken around him. Want of work led him to apply to Mrs. Hudson Taylor at Hang-chau for a situation, and he was engaged to do washing.

The foreigners amongst whom he now found himself

* Heb. x. 32.

were strangely different from any he had met before, and for a while Ah-liang was sorely puzzled. They wore Chinese garments, ate with chop-sticks, and lived on Chinese food. Moreover, they had a curiously persistent way of talking to every one about certain unheard-of religious beliefs, that seemed to afford them much satisfaction and peace of mind. One of the household, for example, a tall Scotchman, having discovered that Ah-liang could read the Romanised colloquial, would frequently spend hours beside him at the washing-tub or ironing-table reading aloud the foreign sacred books, trying to make himself understood in the language still so strange to his unaccustomed lips, and getting the busy washerman to correct his many blunders. So persistent was he in these efforts that Ah-liang, who had been inclined to laugh at it all as a good joke, began seriously to ask himself—

"Is there not something *real* in convictions that impel a man like this Duncan to such earnest efforts on our behalf? One can plainly see that his only object in learning Chinese is to preach these strange doctrines."

The man was impressed; but not converted.

Amongst the large family at Sin-k'ai Lung was a Swiss lady who, at times, was not a little startled to hear a voice swearing roundly in her own tongue. Ah-liang thought that no one understood his vehement speech; but it was his turn to be surprised when one day, having discovered the offender, Miss Desgraz reproved him for the use of expressions that could not be allowed in the Mission home.

"There must be foreigners *and* foreigners!" was his mental comment. "These people are certainly different from any I have met before!"

By degrees, as the SPIRIT OF GOD wrought in his soul, Ah-liang began to listen more attentively at morning and evening prayers and in the various meetings. A change became noticeable in his life and character. And at last the

once swearing washerman confessed himself a follower of CHRIST. He was baptised, and a consistent walk during the remaining years of his life testified to the reality of his change of heart.

Very soon after his own conversion Ah-liang began to long for the salvation of his younger brother, and persuaded him to come up to Hang-chau on the plea of obtaining employment in the Mission press. The young man left the old home in the country with the strongest protestations to his family and friends that he would never do as his brother had done—cast off the worship of his ancestors, and the gods of his native land. But ere long the SPIRIT of the one true GOD took possession of his heart also, and Liang-iong became lost to the circle of his indignant clan, but was found in the fold of the Good Shepherd. Both brothers proved earnest Christians; and the younger was the first evangelist sent out by the Hang-chau native missionary Society. To this day he labours faithfully in connection with the Inland Mission; but Ah-liang sleeps in JESUS, having finished his course with joy.

"He was one of my best helpers in the early days of the T'ai-chau work," wrote Mr. Rudland. "I loved him as a brother."

THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

The first T'ai-chau out-station was in the busy, growing city of Huang-yen, distant about twenty miles, across the river, seaward. It was some time before suitable premises could be secured in this place, but ultimately the LORD raised up a friend in the person of an old woman living on the spot, through whom the native evangelist, Chu Sien-seng, rented a house at his own expense, early in 1869.

The story is interesting, as showing how important first impressions may be in their results upon those whom the missionary is seeking to win to CHRIST.

SCENE IN A BUSY STREET.

Like most of the people in her city, this dear old lady had never seen the foreigners, but had heard plenty against them. One summer day, however, while on a visit to her daughter at T'ai-chau, some of the neighbours told her that they had been to call on Mrs. Rudland, who had received them kindly. This set the old woman longing to go, too, and curiosity conquering fear the visit was paid. A kindly reception awaited the strangers from the missionary lady, who was found neither too busy nor too tired to take them all over the house, letting them see for themselves that there was really nothing to be afraid of. A cup of tea followed, and a friendly talk about their own affairs, and the true way of finding happiness. The visit over, the old woman carried back to her home in Huang-yen a heart in which the

foreigners had found a warm place. Mrs. Rudland, although she little knew it, had made a valuable friend.

Not long after this the native evangelist, Chu Sien-seng, was passing along the busy streets of Huang-yen, selling his tracts and books. His heart was heavy. Every effort to gain an entrance for the Gospel in that city seemed unavailing. No one would hear of letting "the foreign devils" a house.

"Good-day, Chu Sien-seng!"

With a bright face our old friend is standing before him. "*Ts'ing-lœ ky'üoh dzô.*" "Do come and have some tea."

In a few minutes they were talking together in her guest-room, the hostess graphically relating all about Mrs. Rudland's courtesy.

"Ah," remarked the evangelist, "the teachers earnestly desire to rent a house in your own honourable place of residence, but I have twice tried to obtain one and failed; and do not now know where to turn."

What were his surprise and thankfulness when his new friend at once responded that it was well they had met, for she would be able to help him.

In the evening when her son came home, the old woman told him what had occurred, and had no difficulty in enlisting his sympathy, for he also had been to the chapel in T'ai-chau, and had received pleasant impressions. The outcome was that the young man went next day to a friend of his, a silversmith, and urged him to let one of his houses to the missionaries, offering to act himself as middle-man in the transaction. The arrangement was soon made, and possession promised on the fifteenth day of the first moon. At the time appointed the house was placed at Mr. Rudland's disposal, and the neighbours seemed very friendly.

"I spent the whole of one day amongst them," wrote Mr. Rudland, "talking, till quite wearied, about the Gospel.

I trust blessing will rest upon that place. It is growing rapidly, and the people come and go from many other centres."

How to open Prison Doors.

Soon after the chapel was opened at Huang-yen, a poor woman came into the city from her village home, some eight miles distant. Her husband was constable of the place in which they lived, and they had one much-loved son. Just a little old Chinawoman, wrinkled and bent with years, dusty and footsore from her tramp along the country ways; merely a common-place, peasant-body entering the city gates; no dignity nor pathos surely, here? Hearts differ strangely, sometimes, from outward seeming. Who would suppose all the sad story of quest and longing hidden behind that quiet face?

A devout Buddhist, she has tried by every means in her power to obtain peace of heart, but in vain. She has made many a distant pilgrimage to famous shrines, and has given herself to chanting prayers and other methods of accumulating merit. What is the use of it all? Still the same heart-hunger appeals to the Unknown. And now she is growing old. Soon she will be unable to drag her weary feet up the unending treadmill of good works. And what if, after all, the whole thing should prove a blunder, all one's religion wrong—wrong at the last! What then?

Once she had found her way to a Roman Catholic chapel. Things had seemed little more promising there. Though it was doing still, it was not doing only; and the poor weary soul thought to cast in her lot with them. But this market day has brought her into the city, where people are talking of the "Jesus doctrine" station.

"I will go there," she said to herself, little dreaming how near she was drawing at last to the Saviour of the world.

What is this novel message?

"It is not doing that can help us. All that we need is done."

So the teacher is saying; and with wondering joy she learns for the first time that no good works are of any avail in bringing us to GOD, that all we can do is to trust the finished work of CHRIST.

Soon after this the poor woman fell into grievous trouble. A murder was committed in the country district, for which her husband was responsible; and the culprit disappeared. Failing to find the offender, the constable, himself, became liable to punishment; but he was only an old man, whose life was of no account.

"Leave him to hunt out the criminal," said the enraged Mandarin. "Imprison his son instead."

So the only son of the poor old couple, a promising young fellow of good character, was imprisoned under threat of execution if the real offender were not soon forthcoming. Heartbroken, the mother made her way to Huang-yen to ask the evangelist's help. Chu Sien-seng was away, but his place was supplied by another native preacher, who told the distressed mother that, although no political influence could be used on the young man's behalf, she could pray to GOD for him, and that the hearts of all men are in His Almighty Hand.

"Alas!" replied she sadly, "I don't know how to pray."

The assistant taught and helped her, prayed for them all in their extremity, and asked that the Mandarin's heart might be changed, the young man delivered, and that both he and his mother might be eternally saved, and made a blessing to many.

"We have now committed the matter to GOD," said he. "Go home, *Lao Nai-nai*, in peace. Your trouble you have given over to the LORD. You must leave it with Him; your son will soon be set free."

Quite comforted, the poor mother went home in simple faith, and told her neighbours the good news.

"It is all right. My son will come back again."

They, of course, did not believe her, and waited incredulously to see the result of so strange a proceeding. But when, in a few days, the Mandarin, after beating the young man nearly to death, did actually release him, they were beyond measure amazed. The grateful mother made him kneel down in the midst of their bewildered friends, and, kneeling herself beside him, publicly gave thanks to GOD for this wonderful answer to her prayers. The neighbours naturally grew anxious to have a teacher and learn more about the strange new doctrine; and thus the blessing spread.

THE END OF THE IDOLS' EMPIRE.

Another case, no less interesting and encouraging, occurred during the first year of the Huang-yen work. It was a story of iconoclasm.

One autumn day a respectable-looking man walked into the chapel where Yih-chün, one of the native helpers, was sitting to receive visitors. He seemed from the first quite interested in what the assistant had to say, and bought several books about the doctrine.

"You, then, were not always a *Sing Yiæ-su-go nying?*"

"Believe-in-Jesus-man."

"No," answered Yih-chün,—naming the religious order to which he once belonged.

"Strange! I am an unworthy member of that sect," exclaimed the guest; and a discussion of the reasons that had induced the Christian to abandon his former mode of worship followed. As Yih-chün explained the matter, dwelling upon the one and only way of obtaining peace with GOD, the stranger's heart was touched.

"This is just what I want," he answered, with evident

conviction. And away he went with his books and tracts, to rehearse it all to his friends and neighbours in the country. The Truth commended itself to the hearts of these simple people. They heard it gladly. After a while the man came back, bringing others with him. They continued visiting the station from time to time, and finally sent a deputation to ask that some one might go and live amongst them to teach them more fully from the Scriptures.

"We will provide a chapel," they said, "and a preacher's house."

In fact, one man had already bought a property, which he placed at the missionaries' disposal.

Yih-chün was sent to visit these interesting inquirers, and found all just as they said. The proposed chapel had formerly been a Buddhist nunnery and temple. A man and his wife of the name of Ling were then occupying the premises. He was a carpenter by trade, and she had formerly been a novice in the temple. When the abbess died the place had been sold, with the pretty bamboo grove belonging to it. Some of the idols were taken away by the people, but others still remained, witnesses to the great change wrought by the power of GOD.

Later on Chu Sien-seng also visited Dien-tsi, and found the people still earnestly inquiring after the truth. Long before he reached the little hamlet he was told of one and another who had become disciples of JESUS, and it seemed widely known that the old nunnery had been bought for a Christian chapel. The people pressed him with perpetual questions about the new faith. To learn how to pray to the true GOD seemed their chief desire.

"How must we pray to Him, and where? How often in the day? And will He hear us?"

Two or three of the men seemed to have a clear grasp of the Truth; and the wife of the man who bought the nunnery appeared to be truly converted. One of the ancient idols,

a Goddess of Mercy, accompanied Chu Sien-seng on his return, and found a strange home in the house of the missionary.

Early next year Mr. Jackson formally opened the Dien-tsi temple as a place for Christian worship. It was the evening of a lovely spring day when he reached the village, with two of the native helpers. Very warm was the welcome that awaited them from the Carpenter Ling and his wife, whose faces lit with joy as they saw their friends approaching. Supper was soon served, and at evening worship the missionary's heart overflowed with thankfulness to hear those joyous believers telling how they had been brought out of darkness into GOD'S marvellous light.

Two days were spent in visiting the neighbouring towns and villages, preaching the Gospel, and inviting the people to come and witness the dedication of the temple and nunnery to the worship of the one true GOD. On Saturday afternoon, while Mr. Jackson was still thus engaged, his native helpers were busy preparing the place for its new uses, removing the last of the old idols, and clearing out cobwebs and dust.

"We got back just in time," he wrote, "to assist in dismantling the last Goddess of Mercy. The incense-table we used for a preaching desk, and I myself occupied the chair upon which she used to sit."

How brightly the sunshine of that Sunday morning rose on the little village in the heart of CHEH-KIANG! The old temple was thronged. And to many of the audience the change in the building around them pictured a still greater change wrought deeply in themselves. All listened with intense interest, and some remained behind to ask questions. "I left the young Christians," wrote Mr. Jackson, "happy, and full of hope for the success of the Gospel in that district."

The good work continued, and in January 1874 Mr. Hudson Taylor found a warm welcome at Dien-tsi, where,

during a brief visit, he preached twice to attentive audiences, and examined eight candidates for baptism. Half-a-dozen more were shortly added, and the little church grew as time went on.

Thus the work spread from Huang-yen, gathering in those prepared to receive the Truth, and gladdening all with a consciousness that the LORD Himself was with them, "confirming the Word with signs following."

Twenty miles south of Huang-yen and Dien-tsi lies the important city of T'ai-p'ing, opened as another out-station from T'ai-chau in January 1874.

"In the early dawn of a cold winter day," wrote Mr. Taylor, "we first drew near this busy city. Oh, the crowds of people that filled the main streets! . . . We walked through two or three miles of thoroughfare in which it was difficult to pass along for the multitudes. It was market-day, and sometimes we were brought to a standstill by the throng. At the west gate I ascended the city wall. . . . Smaller in area than Huang-yen, T'ai-p'ing is more densely populated; indeed, it is more closely packed with houses than any city I have seen in China. I could but sit down on the wall and pray GOD to have mercy upon the people, to set before us an open door, and to draw many hearts to the SAVIOUR. . . . Next day, as we were breakfasting in an eating-house, the people began to ask many questions. One young man showed much earnestness in inquiring about the Truth, listening to all we said. I think we shall hear of him again. . . . On our way back to the boat I went into the City Temple, and preached to the people who gathered about us, some appearing to listen with pleasure. As we neared the boat, we met two men who had come to tell us of a house we could obtain. I sent the native brethren to see it, and finding it suitable, we took it at a moderate

rental. They met two women on their way, whose deep earnestness to learn the plan of Salvation much moved and encouraged them."

While waiting, alone, for the return of his helpers, an incident occurred of which we subjoin Mr. Taylor's own account. It is noteworthy as showing the deep longing wrought by the HOLY SPIRIT in the hearts of some with whom the missionary has never come in contact, and as illustrating the way in which He guides His servants to such seeking souls, no matter how remote.

AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

"An old man of seventy-two found me out in the boat, I know not how, and entering into conversation, manifested a solicitude about spiritual things such as I have never seen exceeded in China.

"I asked him to sit down, which he did in a preoccupied manner; and I began, as usual, by inquiring his honourable name.

"'My name is Dzing,' he replied; 'but the question which troubles me, and to which I can find no satisfactory answer, is this, What am I to do with my sins?'

"'Yes,' I responded, 'that is the question of questions; but many do not consider it. It is to answer this supreme question that GOD has sent us missionaries to China.'

"'Our scholars say there is no hereafter,' he interrupted; 'that the three *Huen* and six *Pah*, of which the soul is composed, are scattered at death, after which there is no personal existence; but I cannot think that it really is so.'

"'Indeed, it is not so,' I replied. 'After death comes the Judgment.'

"'Ah, yes!' he exclaimed, 'I know it is so; I feel it is

so. I think again and again about it, and I don't know what is to be done with my sins. I pray to this and that and the other of our gods,' mentioning a long string of them; 'I burn incense and candles when I can. But all that seems to leave the question of sin untouched. Oh! I am very old, and cannot expect to live long. What can I do? What am I to do with my sins?'

"How easy it would have been at home to urge the truth, 'Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved'; but such words would have had no meaning to him. He had never heard of JESUS CHRIST, much less of salvation through His Name. I was deeply moved; and as I raised my heart to GOD, the old man continued,—

"'Some people say one must abstain from all animal food. Should I live, sir, on a vegetable or mixed diet?'

"'There is no merit in the one, nor sin in the other,' I replied. 'Both affect the stomach, and not the heart.'

"'Ah! so it has always appeared to me. It seems to leave the question of sin quite untouched. Oh, sir! I lie on my bed, and think, and think; I sit in the daytime and think, and think. I think, and think, and think again; but I cannot tell what is to be done with my sins. I am seventy-two years of age; I cannot expect to complete the decade. '*To-day knows not to-morrow's lot.*' And if this is true of all, how much the more of me! Can you tell me what I must do with my sins?'

"'I can, if you will listen; I can point you to the only true way of escape from them. You know the saying—"*We are heaven-begotten, heaven-nourished, heaven-fed*"?'

"'True, true,' said he; 'and how is such mercy, such goodness, such grace to be recompensed? Our scholars say we only need to thank Heaven and the gods at the end of the year, that nothing further is required; but I cannot feel satisfied with this. I do not see how we can recompense it.'

"'And you do not yet know half of all there is to give thanks for,' I continued. 'The favour of Heaven can never be recompensed. The true GOD is indeed a Father; and as He supplies our bodily wants, so has He met our spiritual need. He saw that we had sins we could not deal with, and sent His own SON to be our Substitute and die for us. His name is JESUS. He was nailed to a cross of wood with four nails; one in each hand and one in each foot. He freely gave His life for us, and shed His blood for our forgiveness. What you have to do with your sins is to accept free forgiveness for them all.'

"'Will He forgive *my* sins?' said the old man slowly.

"'Yes,' I responded. 'He was raised from the dead on the third day, and ascended into heaven, a great Saviour, not only to pardon our sins, but to give us power against sin.'

"'Ah!' he exclaimed; 'and what can we do to recompense such favour?'

"'Nothing,' I answered, 'absolutely nothing. It must be all received just as freely as the air we breathe or life itself.'

"Deliverance from the *power* of sin was the one thing my aged visitor seemed most to feel the need of.

"'We all know what is right,' he said, 'but who can do it? The whole course of the world is wrong. What is government but fraud? What is trade but fraud? What is life but wrong upon wrong, wrong upon wrong? The whole world is full of vanity and hollowness.'

"Much more that he uttered was of the deepest interest to me; and in it all the question of sin, how to get rid of its thraldom and its consequences, was the one thing he was most agonisingly alive to. I directed him to many passages from the Word to meet the questions he raised; and he was evidently much comforted, and will, I doubt not, seek the living GOD in prayer. But it was painfully bewildering to him to realise that his one, his only hope—the idolatry of seventy years—was utterly worthless!

"When my companions returned he listened as they repeated again the story of the Cross, and finally retired to think calmly over all that he had heard, greatly delighted to find that we had rented a house, and purposed soon to station two native brethren in that city. May GOD grant to him light and peace in believing.

"Ah, beloved friends," continues Mr. Taylor, "how grateful should we be for our Gospel privileges; and how deeply should we feel the sad condition of those who are destitute of them all!

"There are yet fifty cities, capitals of countries, in this sea-board province of CHEH-KIANG alone, as destitute of the Gospel as was the city of T'ai-ping. Each of these counties has its many unwalled towns and villages, and contains on an average a population of three or four hundred thousand souls—all as needy, if not all as awakened, as this old man.

> 'Shall we whose souls are lighted with wisdom from on High,
> Shall we to men benighted the Lamp of Life deny?'

"If the LORD graciously provide the men and the means . . . we might very soon place a Gospel light in each one of these dark districts. We are asking GOD for this; will you not join your prayers with ours?"

The work at T'ai-p'ing continued with much encouragement. And when next year five persons were baptised in a mountain stream outside the city, one of them, whose face shone, was an old man of seventy-three.

While the Gospel was winning its way in these districts, encouragement was not wanting in other out-stations connected with T'ai-chau. A warm interest sprung up amongst the relatives and friends of the

evangelist, Yih-chün, and no less than three different buildings were offered by them for missionary purposes.

"Only send us a teacher," came the message, "that we may hear more of GOD."

"For the present," wrote Mr. Rudland, "I have left Yih-chün to work in his own and the neighbouring villages. His relatives, who are a large clan, implored me to do so. Several of them seemed to be really anxious inquirers, and I hope soon to see many truly converted."

On visiting this place early in 1873, Mr. Rudland heard of the following incident, which had recently made a deep impression upon the people :-

"GOD CAN AND WILL RESTORE!"

One of the newly received members had been called away from home, and during his absence his wife fell seriously ill. Her friends summoned the native doctor, who ordered incense and candles to be burned in the house to a famous idol, and several other performances of the same sort. While the proceedings were going on the husband returned, and, seeing the unusual stir, asked what it all meant. The doctor answered it was to save the life of his wife, which entirely depended upon his instructions being fully carried out.

"Take away these things!" replied the indignant husband; "stop the ceremony at once! I will not have such folly in my house."

In the midst of the curses and abuse of the crowd he threw the candles and incense out of doors.

"I will pray to the true GOD, who can and will restore my wife."

The words fell impressively on the noisy disputants, who

were further solemnised as they watched him kneel down and simply pray. What was their wonder when, in a few days, the sufferer was restored! A real impression was produced, especially amongst the women, several of whom came into the city to see Mrs. Rudland and learn more.

The interest of the people throughout that whole district was most encouraging, and illustrates one of the happiest phases of missionary work. Of another busy centre visited upon the same journey Mr. Rudland wrote :—

"Immediately on our arrival we were besieged for Christian books, of which they had seen some before our coming. The sun had set behind the mountains, but we had to keep on selling till we could no longer distinguish the titles of the books. Then we had supper; but before we could finish the people were asking for further supplies, and we went on selling and preaching the Gospel till nearly midnight. Next morning two of us went into the street, while one remained at the inn. Soon our whole book-stock was exhausted. I had never seen a crowd listen so eagerly in a Chinese street before, nor ever found one so well behaved. . . . The people asked us to come again, and bring more Testaments. One of the inquirers has been in the habit of visiting us at T'ai-chau for some months past, and latterly he has brought friends. They are very anxious for a teacher."

In T'ai-chau itself the work was no less promising, as may be gathered from the following letter written by Mrs. Hudson Taylor in the autumn of 1873 :—

"I think T'ai-chau is perhaps the prettiest city I have ever seen. I wish I could picture it for you. Fine hills rise, range upon range, all around, and a river, fed from

REST PAVILION ON A HILL.

mountain streams far away, winds its circuitous course below the city with its white-washed houses, and grey-tiled roofs, brightened by the green foliage of peach, tallow, and camphor trees. The streets are regular, except where they encircle the base of a two-peaked hill, upon which stands a pair of pagodas. . . .

"It looks such a peaceful spot! and yet, as I have learned, it is often the scene of bloody executions. Being the chief city of the department, all prisoners convicted of capital crimes are brought here; and at the busiest point in the city, just where the two principal thoroughfares cross, these poor wretches are publicly beheaded, and their bodies left till sundown, to be an example to all passers-by. Twice

during the two months of my visit I was warned not to take that road, lest I should be sickened by the sights that might meet my gaze.

"My native woman, a nice middle-aged creature and a good walker, for the modest sum of twopence daily, used to come for me each afternoon, when we would go out visiting together, from two o'clock till dark. She was ready to go anywhere, and took me to see all her friends, seeming thoroughly interested herself in my message. Often she would repeat in one house what she had heard me say in another, adding comments of her own. . . . The women all received us very kindly, and came flocking to the chapel in answer to our invitations. My heart was specially drawn to them. They seemed so ready for the Gospel. They would listen quietly and attentively, and often put such questions as—

"'How can we be saved?'

"'How may we get to heaven?'

"One poor woman, who had come a long distance, listened to all I said, and then with tears in her eyes responded—

"'Ah! that is very nice for others; but there can be no happiness for me; my only son is dead.'

"I tried to comfort her, telling her again of JESUS, but I know not with what result. . . .

"The Northern wall of the city winds along the brow of the hills, on which there are many temples. I visited several, and was especially interested in one which had been the first home of our friends, Messrs. Meadows and Jackson, when they commenced work here. I saw the window from which their things had been stolen, and the old priest who received the strangers, and who, because of the theft, was put into prison until they obtained his release. He seems now on the verge of the grave. He believes in the foreigners, and in the foreigners' medicine, but also! not in their GOD.

"In November our hearts were rejoiced by an addition of four to the little church—two men and two women. . . . The people for miles around T'ai-chau, like those inside the city, are wonderfully open to the Gospel. In several places they are really begging for a preacher, and willingly offer to provide the chapel themselves."

This was the story of twenty years ago.

What of to-day? What has been the sequel of so much bright beginning?

Come out to China and see. Short of that it would be difficult to obtain an adequate view of the deep work for Eternity that the last two decades have witnessed in CHEH-KIANG. Labourers who twenty years ago broke up the untouched soil and went forth often weeping, bearing precious seed, have gathered golden harvests season by season, and are busy reaping yet. Mr. Meadows is still there—now Superintendent of the province, and the oldest worker in the Inland Mission next to Mr. Taylor himself. Mr. Rudland still holds the fort in the old T'ai-chau centre. "I have just baptised one hundred and eighty-five," he writes, "out of over three hundred hopeful candidates and inquirers."

"The growth of the converts is most healthy," adds Mr. Meadows. "The number and efficiency of our unpaid pastors and teachers never increased more rapidly; the progress of the schools was never so encouraging, and evangelistic effort never of greater extent in CHEH-KIANG, than it has been this year."

But we anticipate.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHICAGO OF CHINA; OR, FOUNDING THE WESTERN BRANCH OF THE C. I. M.

IN the closing days of 1872 the members of the Inland Mission were cheered by the return of Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Taylor to the field. In several of the stations at this time special prayer was being made about the needs of the growing work. Very rapid had been its extension during the six years since the arrival of the *Lammermuir* party, and the responsibility and difficulty of its management had increased in proportion to its enlarging sphere. Already there were sixteen stations and thirty workers, scattered in four provinces; but, far from satisfied with this result, Mr. Taylor and those associated with him turned with ever-deepening desire to the still unreached Beyond.

New Year's Eve was devoted, as usual, to prayer and fasting; and one special petition was that 1873 might witness definite advance towards the evangelisation of the far interior—the nine vast inland provinces without a missionary.

"We are not discouraged," wrote Mr. Taylor, "by the greatness of the difficulties, by the smallness of our numbers, or by the fact that during the past year, with a large and rapidly growing Mission, our faith has been more than ever tried with regard to funds. If GOD be for us, difficulties are of no account. He can save by few as easily as by many; and it is still true that 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of GOD.' Share with us, then, in present prayer, and soon we shall join in grateful praise."

The year thus entered was one of steady work and progress. Eleven new stations and out-stations were opened in the four provinces already occupied, including one at Shanghai, in charge of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Fishe, which from that time became the business centre of the Mission. The work in Su-chau was given up for more needy openings, that great and important centre having been occupied by other Societies.

Two more brethren—Messrs. Groombridge and Donovan—came out; but the staff was still insufficient to permit of any advance. Funds also continued low; and towards the end of 1873, in spite of all the hopeful anticipations that had been entertained, it became a grave question as to whether extension should be attempted. Prayer was the only resource; and as the year drew to a close the matter was constantly remembered before the LORD. Meanwhile in England, all unknown to His servants on the

field, answers had been given to their petitions. Reinforcements were already on the way.

It had not seemed likely to happen. It had looked all but impossible.

The Council and friends of the Mission at home, in hearty sympathy with the longings of those in China, earnestly desired to send out more labourers and increased funds ; but even when an opportunity occurred in the return of Mr. and Mrs. Judd, after a brief furlough, the realisation of their wishes appeared distant as ever. None of the candidates were ready to go at once, and even had the men been forthcoming, there was no money in hand to meet their expenses.

Just at this juncture two young brethren from the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missions* volunteered for China, and were commended to the Council as men for whom the Directors entertained a warm regard, and in whom they placed the fullest confidence. Henry Taylor and Frederick Baller were ready to start without delay, and were glady accepted to join the returning party. For the men had not been given without the means to send them forth. A considerable sum of money had just been handed to Mr. Judd, specially for the use of

* This Missionary Institute was founded in 1872 by Dr. and Mrs. H. Grattan Guinness. During the twenty-one years of its existence, five hundred and eighty-eight young men and women have been sent out to all parts of the world, in connection with thirty different Societies. Messrs. Baller & Taylor, who joined the Inland Mission, were the first of this large band.

new missionaries and the opening up of fresh work in China, quite apart from other help that he was receiving towards the passage and outfit of his own family. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD."

Nor was this all. Other remarkable answers to the same prayers quickly followed, looking back upon which Mr. Taylor wrote* in the succeeding year :—

"THE LORD IS INDEED OUR SHEPHERD.

"Infinite in wisdom and unbounded in resources, no human needs are ever unforeseen by Him—though they may often take us by surprise—and no circumstances can be difficult for Him to meet.

"'The LORD *is* my Shepherd'; it is the unchanging present. And 'The LORD is *my* Shepherd'; for large as is His flock, and various as are its circumstances and needs, I have a special, personal relationship to Him, and He to me. His eye is ever upon me. Nothing that concerns me is unknown by, or uninteresting to Him. The fondest mother who treasures in loving memory her infant's smile never thinks of counting the hairs upon his head. But the very hairs of my head are all numbered. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice ; how much more does the LORD care for *me* whom He purchased with His own precious blood !

* *Occasional Papers*, No. 38, October 1874.

"'The LORD is my Shepherd.' The supply of all my need is therefore secured; the guidance I require is guaranteed; protection, not *from* trial, danger, and sorrow, but *in* them from all evil, is made certain; and on these blessings I can depend at all times and in all places, for 'The Shepherd of Israel' 'shall neither slumber nor sleep.' How true, then, how natural, how inevitable the conclusion—'I shall not want'; I shall have no lack; shall not fall short of any good thing. . . .

"But we can only rest in these blessed facts in so far as we give ourselves up wholly to Him, to submit to His rule, and unhesitatingly to accept His discipline. Doing this, how safe, how sure, how blessed is our position! We cannot be forsaken; we cannot be put to shame. In times of drought we shall be satisfied. And we shall learn by glad experience, through the teaching of the HOLY SPIRIT, to see in all difficulties and obstacles simply means for the manifestation of GOD'S faithfulness, love, and power.

"More than eight years have elapsed since the *Lammermuir* party sailed from London in the faith that the LORD was our Shepherd, and indeed He has proved so. In journeyings oft, and in opening up more than forty stations and out-stations, through His protecting care, no life has been lost, and a wonderful measure of peace has been enjoyed.

"Often as our faith has been tried with regard to funds, the LORD has ever proved faithful. Beloved brethren and sisters have been marvellously helped

when brought very low. One brother, in the absence of funds, was sustained for days (if not weeks) by presents of food from the heathen around him. Another brother and sister were tided over a difficulty by a birthday present made to their child from one of the native Christians. A third was sustained for a time through money given him by a native helper, who had raised it by pawning his own clothes. A fourth in great need received a present of money from a native sister, who in a dream had been directed to aid him, and was helped on several other occasions in ways equally marked. Continually do I receive letters telling me how opportunely the supplies which GOD has ministered through me have come to hand. Sympathy has not been excited by publishing these letters, nor has our need been made known to man, but to GOD alone. There are more than a hundred labourers now in connection with the Mission, counting the missionaries and their wives, and the native helpers. Sometimes for weeks together I have not had a dollar of Mission money in hand ; yet in His own good time the needed supplies have come. Brethren with their families have urgently required to return to England when there have been no funds in hand even for the ordinary outlay of the Mission. Prayer has been made ; and in remarkable ways, which we cannot now detail, the LORD has supplied the means. We have ever found it a safe thing, and a blessed, to trust in the living GOD.

" One very important question, however, was raised

by these frequent and increasingly severe trials. Were we to regard them simply as tests of faith? or were we to learn from them that the Lord would not have us attempt any further extension of the work at present? We waited much upon GOD, and frequently sought His guidance with regard to this. . . .

"During November, December, and the first part of January, I asked the LORD to make it unmistakably clear whether He would have us prepare to commence work in some of the totally unreached provinces or not; and also whether we should seek to occupy more stations in CHEH-KIANG. My mind was assured that we ought to do both; and I felt constrained in prayer to ask the LORD to give us . . . labourers to extend the work into every unoccupied department and county of CHEH-KIANG, of which there were fifty, and also men and means to commence operations in the nine unevangelised provinces as well.

"While we were thus waiting upon the LORD in China, He was putting it into the heart of one of His stewards at home to devise and execute liberal things for the spread of the Gospel. A letter was received by Mr. Hill, one of the honorary secretaries, dated December 5th, 1873, in which the writer said:—

"'*In two months' time I hope to place in the hands of your Council of arrangement the sum of £800, for the further extension of inland China mission work. Please remember, for fresh provinces.*'

"Need I say that when a copy of this letter reached me in China it caused our hearts to sing for

joy? This generous donation was received in due course; and now, 'assuredly gathering' that the LORD had indeed called us 'to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond,' Mr. Judd has secured premises in

MR. AND MRS. JUDD.

Wu-ch'ang, the capital city of HU-PEH and HU-NAN, the latter one of the unoccupied provinces; and he will there (D.V.) superintend the formation of a Western Branch of the China Inland Mission.

"The task before us is a mighty one, and the

difficulties can scarcely be exaggerated. But we know Who it is that holds the keys of David. When He opens none can shut; when He shuts none can open."

Shortly after this a further sum of £3,000 was also set apart for Western China, by donors who desired their names to remain unknown. Thus was inaugurated the first decided movement towards the evangelisation of those great and populous regions, which through long centuries had lain in hopeless heathen darkness.

The summer of 1874 was spent by Mr. and Mrs. Judd at Wu-ch'ang, the metropolis of Central China, in seeking to establish a basis from which extended journeys could be made to North, South, and West, throughout the interior.

Wu-ch'ang was at that time the furthermost point which missionary effort had reached on its westward march into the darkness of unbroken heathenism. Situated at the junction of the Han river with the mighty Yang-tsi, one of a group of three immense cities that stand triangularly upon the three shores formed by the confluence of these streams, Wu-ch'ang represents, with Han-kow and Han-yang, a resident population of at least a million. Countless numbers of travellers from all parts of the empire seek its busy marts. It occupies relatively to the coast and to Western China a position similar to that of Chicago in the United States. And as Chicago thirty years ago was pretty much the boundary at which the

westward-flowing tide of material civilisation stopped, so Wu-ch'ang, at the time of which we write, was the furthest point to which missionary effort had penetrated; beyond it there was scarcely a gleam of Gospel light.

While Mr. Judd was seeking to obtain a basis of operations in this most important centre, the younger brethren recently arrived from home were busy studying the language at Nan-king, preparing to go inland as soon as the LORD should open the way. Deeply interesting is the series of events by means of which that way was opened in due season. Not easily could it be, nor just at once. Months of sifting and trial had yet to come, bringing their precious discipline; the night had still to darken before the dawn of that day of golden opportunity which burns around us now. But assuredly when the time was fully ripe, GOD'S hand would remove all barriers and "out of weakness" make His servants strong.

CHAPTER IV.

STORIES FROM SHAO-HING.

"THE child is father to the man,"—true of organisations as well as of individual life.

Extension was at hand. Inland China was soon to be opened to the Gospel. When GOD works, everything fits in. Men and means were needed for coming enlargements, and He sent them ; free access to the interior, and it was given ; experienced workers to direct future developments, and these, too, He supplied.

As Mr. Taylor travelled at this time from place to place, visiting stations, consulting senior helpers and encouraging younger ones in the work, how little could even he foresee the needs of the future—how much less provide for them ! But there was One who knew it all. GOD had His leaders in training ; and changes, simple, yet significant, began to appear. Some who were to direct future forward movements were set free for wider spheres ; while others, charged with new responsibility, were being educated for difficult duties to come.

Among the most important of these changes was

the return of Mr. Stevenson to England for a brief furlough. Many years were to elapse ere he should resume his much-loved work in China. New toils and pioneering efforts awaited him, in seeking to enter —from Upper Burmah—the western provinces of the great Empire.* But all his varying experiences were to prove a precious training and discipline for more important service, still to follow. Since 1886 he has occupied the responsible position of Deputy Director of the Mission in China. From the earlier years of his missionary life are gathered the facts and pictures here subjoined.

Stories from Shao-hing.

A bright, mild autumn day;† an amphitheatre of hills at whose feet a mountain stream glints through the feathery foliage of a graceful bamboo grove; above, the blue canopy of a cloudless sky; and for actors in this scene a Chinese crowd from the city close at hand. A group by the waterside is evidently the centre of attraction.

"Is that the foreign teacher?" some one asks.

A glance at the tall figure of J. W. Stevenson answers the question.

What is there in this Chinese crowd to light that quiet Scotchman's face?

"All nature seems to praise Thee, my God!" his heart is saying, "and *these* . . ."

His eye passes from one to another of the little company, and his spirit overflows with gratitude. Follow his thoughts a moment:—

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* See Chapter XI. † November 27th, 1873.

Here is Tao-hsing, whose name means "*Truth flourishing or triumphant.*" Evil and violence were once the only elements that flourished in his life. His house, a gambling hell, the haunt of the most abandoned, afforded him a lucrative business, plenty of companions, and fame as the leader of so notorious a set and host at their acknowledged resort. To-day his old associates seek him in vain. Tao-hsing, by the grace of GOD, is a new creature. The rooms that once were scenes of sin are set apart for the preaching of the Gospel.

"Will you not send an evangelist to our town?" is his one plea. "I will gladly give him a home and all the help in my power."

Not far from him stand the two Laos, father and son. The young man, like Tao-hsing, has been notoriously wicked, so violent and ungovernable when enraged as to be a terror to the neighbourhood, in which he was known as "the Lion." Now the wondering neighbours ask—

"What is it that has so altered his heart?"

Earnest and consistent Christians, he and his aged father delight to testify to the grace of GOD which has wrought so great a change.

Beside them stands old Foh Nai-nai, the mother of the travelling crockery-mender, "who," the missionary is fond of saying, "is one of the most devoted and zealous Christians it has ever been my privilege to meet." To-day she, too, is confessing her faith in CHRIST by baptism, having been brought to the LORD through a remarkable answer to her own prayers for her son.

"He is dying of the fever!" had been her distressed cry six months before. "Will you send some one to pray with him?" The native assistant went daily, and the poor mother joined her prayers to the GOD of whom she had heard so much, vowing that if her son were but restored she would give herself to His service. The fever abated.

The young man lived. And the old mother, true to her word, began to attend the meetings. She received the Gospel with great simplicity; and several other members of the family seemed hopefully impressed.

And now in the quiet sunshine of this autumn day these first-fruits are ingathered from amongst the hills and valleys of lovely Shing-hien. After the baptism a band of twenty native Christians meets in the chapel, joyfully to commemorate the LORD'S death in anticipation of His return—only a little company, but all brought by His grace out of the hopeless darkness of heathenism, and all baptised by the man whose privilege it is to have been the first light-bearer in this district, never before reached with the Name of JESUS.

"Can you wonder," wrote Mr. Stevenson, "that my heart overflowed with joy and gratitude at being permitted to see so striking a proof of the power of GOD to regenerate this mighty people?"

What lies behind this picture?

Seven years before (May 23rd, 1866), a pioneer visit to the populous city and plain of Shao-hing, when the millions of that great centre were laid as a burden upon the heart of the young Scotch missionary, then only a few months in the field. After that a small beginning—a Chinese house upon a crowded street; three tiny rooms above, forming a simple missionary home; and below, the shop, used for a chapel, or *Ye-su T'ang*, open all day long to visitors. Then patient years of plodding until initial difficulties were conquered, and an entrance was won for the Gospel into the homes and hearts of the people.

Trophies from the "Jesus-Hall."

Centrally situated, at the junction of four busy streets, hard by a well-known bridge, the little chapel in Shao-hing attracted many a passer-by, and the five large characters over the doorway soon became as widely known as the name of the bridge itself. The audiences from the first were large and interested, and much inclined to animated discussion ; for though spiritually dark the people were anything but intellectually deficient. They were by no means prepared to take the preacher's statements for granted.

"Where, then, did evil come from?" they would ask. "How did sin get into the world?"

"Is praying really any use? Can it do anything?"

Fond of argument, and subtle, ingenious reasoners, their questions on these and kindred subjects were sometimes difficult to meet.

One of the earliest converts was a man who has since been much used of God among his fellow-countrymen as pastor of the Shao-hing church. It was as a boatman in that city of canals—the Venice of China—that Chang Siao-fung first became known to Mr. Stevenson, and subsequently as a servant in his own employ. But after his conversion he developed remarkable evangelistic gifts, and it was felt that his sphere lay in the ministry of the Gospel. He became Mr. Stevenson's most valued assistant, and is one for whom, after five-and-twenty years, he still entertains the warmest affection and regard.

The bold stand taken by an old shopkeeper in the observance of the Lord's day was the first public testimony for Christ in Shao-hing. He was a breadmaker, and occupied premises on one of the busiest streets in the city. On professing Christianity he not only regularly closed his

shop on Sunday, but suspended a notice in large characters outside the door, giving his reasons for so doing.

This strange proceeding soon became widely known, and was for a time the talk of the town. But the old bread-maker, unmoved, maintained his testimony, until two years after his baptism he peacefully passed away to be with the LORD.

In answer to prayer, the wives and families of both these men were also blessed, the only son of the breadmaker being early brought to the LORD, and all the evangelist's children becoming a joy to their father's heart.

Another man who proved a valued helper was amongst the first-fruits of the Gospel in Shao-hing—the shoemaker, Fung Che-pao. Standing one day in the door of his shop, he saw the foreign teacher with a native assistant sitting at one of the tables outside a neighbouring tea-house, talking with the guests and passers-by about the new doctrine. He listened, and found that the drift of their conversation concerned a GOD whom they were urging those present to worship. Interested, he joined the group.

"May I be instructed as to what manner of doctrine the foreigner is preaching?"

"Our message," was the answer, "concerns the one true GOD who has made heaven, earth, and all things."

This was a strange and new idea. The shoemaker could not forget it. He had always been accustomed to think of the gods as merely deified men, and of creation as the outcome of a mythical process of evolution, such as intelligent Chinamen delight in discussing.*

* The Chinese theories of cosmogony are by no means confined to the scholars; many of those who have never studied the classics are well acquainted with them by hearsay. And these theories are not without an interesting correspondence with some now prevalent in the Western world. They recognise, in the first place, a state of matter termed by them "*Wu-kih*"—the unformed,

This loftier conception of a Supreme Being whose power had created all things, so commended itself to his mind that it led him to make further inquiries, and he was invited to come on Sunday to the chapel and hear more. Having an acquaintance who was in the habit of attending, Fung Che-pao began by accompanying him. But soon his interest deepened: he came of his own accord, and before long confessed himself a sincere and earnest Christian.

As the Truth began to take possession of his mind he was seriously troubled about his idols and ancestral tablets. At first he thought of giving the latter, which he had so long reverenced, an honourable interment. But on further reflection he decided that this would be making too much of them; so, taking advantage of his wife's absence one day, he put them all into the fire. At another time he was in the act of destroying his god of riches, and had already split it in two, when one of the native assistants coming in begged it for Mr. Stevenson as a trophy of the power of the Gospel.

But though brightened from the first by cases of blessing such as these, all was not plain sailing at Shao-hing. Several of the converts had to suffer persecution, and some were, in consequence, afraid to confess the Saviour.

illimitable stage—comparable to the nebulous fire-mist supposed by some to have been one of the earliest processes of creation. Then follows the *T'ai-kih*, a stage of greater condensation, with limit and form. And this, by still further condensation of some parts and separation of others, divides into the heavens and the earth, which by mutual interaction and gradual development produce all things animate and inanimate. Though now almost forgotten, their most ancient writings do recognise a personal GOD, the Creator of all things; but more recent authorities have explained all this away, substituting "law" and "nature" for Him whose will and work they are.

One dear old lady of nearly seventy was sustained by the grace of GOD under very severe trial.

She had been for seventeen years a devout vegetarian, and had accumulated, as everybody considered, a large amount of merit through her unwearied devotions by day and night. Left a young widow years before, she had determined, as an act of special virtue, never to marry again, but to abandon herself to the life of a Buddhist devotee, with the resolute purpose to leave nothing undone that might secure happiness in, or at any rate alleviate the sufferings, of the future state. She had a private chapel full of idols, to which many women of her acquaintance came. With them often, or alone, she would spend long nights in the wearisome and dreary round of her devotions. She was one of those whom the missionary loves to meet—souls led by the SPIRIT OF GOD, and sincerely seeking the heavenward way. Upon such the Light of Life cannot fail to shine. In her case the change was decided and complete when she grasped the precious truths of the Gospel. Her

idols, beads, and other idolatrous possessions she brought to the missionaries, and, by eating an egg, broke her religious abstinence of seventeen years, cutting all connection with her old manner of life. Severe persecution and bitter reproach came upon her, but the dear old lady kept firm in spite of all, and ultimately was baptised and received into the rapidly growing church.

Before long the good work began to spread from Shao-hing itself to neighbouring cities; and in 1869 and 1870 two important out-stations sprung up in a lovely mountainous district to the south of the great plain. Converts were won, and little churches formed in each of these places, although intense opposition was encountered at first. In both the work has gone steadily forward ever since, and the children of the earliest converts are in many cases foremost amongst the Christians of to-day.

Shing-hien, the first of these out-stations, distant about seventy miles from Shao-hing, is pleasantly situated on the banks of a mountain stream. Here, in the summer of 1872, a remarkable case of conversion occurred, which greatly cheered the missionaries, evidencing the power of GOD to convince even a proud Confucianist of the truth of the Gospel.

How a Siu-ts'ai entered the Kingdom.

Ning Sien-seng was a gentleman of considerable influence and standing in Shing-hien, an able literary man, holding the *Siu-ts'ai*, or B.A. degree. He had become acquainted with foreign thought through studying translations of our scientific works, and had seen something of

Christian literature; but finding the Scriptures dry and unintelligible he had given up reading them. Careless and sceptical as to spiritual things, he considered prayer absurd.

"If there be any GOD," he would say, "which is more than doubtful, of course He must be far too great a Being, and too distantly removed from contact with men to take any interest in the little affairs of our daily life."

One summer day he met Mr. Stevenson, who, at the close of a long and serious conversation, felt greatly drawn to the man, and yet pained at his open infidelity.

"Let me freely confess it, teacher," concluded Ning Sien-seng; "I do not believe the doctrines taught by you foreigners."

With an earnestness which surprised the Confucianist, the missionary replied—

"I shall remember you constantly in prayer to the true and living GOD."

Ning Sien-seng went away, but could not forget the sentence.

"Here," thought he, "is a foreigner, a perfect stranger to me, and yet so concerned about my soul that he will pray for me; and I do not even pray for myself!"

The next thought was not far off, "What if I should begin?"

But prayer such as the missionary had urged seemed impossible to the proud Confucianist.

"And yet," he thought, "the experiment is worth trying."

Thus, doubtfully but earnestly, a cry went up from that heathen heart to the Unknown:—

"O GOD, if there be a GOD, give me light, if light is to be had!"

Again he turned to the Bible, and this time it seemed an entirely new revelation, while the scholar, to his surprise, found in himself, too, a change for which he could not

account. The book so interested him that he read far on into the night. The study of the Word became his great delight. He was led to believe its truths, and to trust the LORD JESUS as his personal Saviour.

"Prayer has saved me; could it not also save my relatives?" Ning Sien-seng began to ask.

His wife, like himself, had been a rigid Confucianist, and he greatly feared confessing to her his new faith. At last he summoned up courage to call her into his study one evening, when, the children having gone to bed, he thought the scene that must inevitably ensue might perhaps be less noticed. She sat down opposite to him, across the room, as is proper for Chinese wives, and waited in silence. But his courage failed him, and he could not speak. Finally his wife remarked—

"You have something to say to me."

It had to come at last—and he poured out his story: "Wife, I have found that there is a Father in heaven."

The ex-Confucianist was probably never more surprised than by her ready answer—

"How glad I am!"

Hers, too, had been a waiting soul. All unknown to her husband, she had been longing for light, and to his confession added her own:—

"For years I have felt that our doctrines and idols were nothing. When the rebels came to the town they sacked the temples and took away the gods. Of course I knew that if they could not save themselves they certainly could not save me. When the soldiers came to our house I got into the clothes-press to hide, in dreadful fear, and there I prayed. I thought there might be somewhere a real God, and I called to Him—'Venerable, Heavenly Father, keep me!' He did keep me, for the rebels came into the room, and ransacked all about, but did not open the cupboard where I was hiding. I have thought, ever since, that

there must be some Great Spirit that we do not know. Can it be true that you have found Him?"

Ere long, to Ning Sien-seng's joy, his wife also confessed her faith in the Saviour.

On a subsequent visit to this city Mr. Stevenson wrote:—

"I was very much encouraged at Shing-hien. GOD has owned Ning Sien-seng's simple faith, and blessed him there to the conversion of several. I baptised him, with two other men (February 23rd, 1873), . . . and am thankful to say that he has fully counted the cost in taking this bold and decided stand. Last Sabbath, unasked by me, he stood up in the chapel, when I had done preaching, and spoke for a considerable time, explaining the Christian faith, relating his own experience, and exhorting his hearers to become, with him, believers in the Saviour. As I heard this noble testimony to the power of the Gospel . . . I could not but thank GOD, and take courage. When I consider this man's position, and see what he has done, and the great persecution to which he is exposed, I frequently realise that the age of heroes and martyrs has not yet passed away."

A few months later, in the scene outside the walls of Sin-ch'ang with which this chapter opens, ten of the converts from that district, including Ning Sien-seng's own son and several others who were spiritually the fruit of his labours, confessed their faith in CHRIST by baptism.

Well might the missionary's heart be filled with joy! The seven years of his patient labour had not been unrewarded,—fifty precious souls won for JESUS

self-propagating Christian churches formed in these three cities ; and a work commenced which has gone on growing in blessing and power to this day. Cause enough, truly, for grateful thanksgiving and profound encouragement ; for the same Divine power that had saved the fifty could equally regenerate fifty millions.

Are there no other hearts that long to share such gladness? There are still scores—yes, *hundreds*—of similar districts waiting, waiting to-day in China, for the light that has never yet dawned upon their gloom. There are still more than nine hundred important walled cities in which no herald of the Cross is found. Where are the men and the women whom the Master would fain send forth into these regions—forerunners of His own coming footsteps, messengers to prepare the way of the LORD? Let us see to it that we do not miss the privilege if it might be ours.

CHAPTER V.

A CONFUCIANIST CITY: ITS CUSTOMS AND CONVERTS.

FUNG-HWA—a Confucianist city. The title suggests a people governed by sage maxims, an unbending code of high morality, just judges welcomed by an obedient, admiring, and exemplary populace, all parents honoured, all children filial—in a word, China's ideal. In point of fact, Fung-hwa was anything but that.

"We found in Fung-hwa," wrote Mr. Crombie, its first missionary, "that a large proportion of the men and many of the women were opium-smokers. Although the city was comparatively small, Confucianism had a stronger hold there than in many places ten times its size. But it must not be thought that on this account the people were specially good, honest, or moral. On the contrary, unusually proud, self-righteous, and wicked, the inhabitants of Fung-hwa were notorious as wild, unruly, and dangerous characters; so much so that a few years previously our consul did not think it prudent to allow British subjects to visit the city at all.

"On one occasion the chief Mandarin of the place gave offence to the people, and several hundreds of them

rebelled against his authority, and having seized and forced him into a Sedan chair, carried him off to Ningpo, and coolly told the officials there that they would not have him any longer to rule over them. In ordinary cases such conduct would have incurred the severest punishment, but Fung-hwa people were not to be trifled with; no resentment was shown, and a fresh Mandarin was given them. About the same time, another official having also offended the people, a mob surrounded his residence. He, thinking to frighten them away, sent out threatening messages, and gave no sign of yielding; but the people, infuriated, pulled down the house about him, and put an end to his life."

Mr. and Mrs. Crombie of the Inland Mission settled in this place early in 1866. At that time, it will be remembered, the C. I. M. was little more than a purpose. The *Lammermuir* party had not yet sailed, and the Mission was scarcely founded. But these early workers found as great need and blessing as those who later on had an organisation behind them. Need there was, certainly.

"When we arrived," wrote Mr. Crombie, "the people had been compelled to submit to a measure of authority; but, like all other dark places of the earth, Fung-hwa was the habitation of horrible cruelties. Suicide was a thing of almost daily occurrence, and infanticide was practised by rich and poor alike, to a fearful extent. The temples that had been destroyed during the rebellion were being rebuilt; and the people were as mad after their idols as ever."

It was with great difficulty that a suitable place was obtained for a chapel in this city. "At one

time," wrote Mr. Taylor, "we had a room in a private house, but the character of some of the occupants was such that it was impossible to remain. Meetings in our second hall were always liable to interruption from other persons occupying the same compound, who had a right to use the place on certain occasions. A third room was opened, the entrance to which was from a court common to three houses. One Sunday morning, while service was going on, those present were greatly distressed by the piteous cries of an infant whose brains were literally being beaten out by its own parents in the adjoining yard. It was a little girl, and would not pay for keeping! How thankful we were to escape from such surroundings when our present chapel was secured may be imagined. The tumble-down buildings, however, were in such a state, that after some parts had fallen of themselves the rest had to be removed as unsafe. Then meetings had to be held in an outhouse, until the liberal donation of a friend enabled us to build a chapel and rooms above it for the missionary."

Situated in a populous district about thirty miles to the south-west of Ningpo, Fung-hwa offered an admirable centre for missionary effort, and great crowds attended the chapel for some months after it was first opened. But it was long before the workers' hearts were gladdened by visible results. The soil seemed especially hard and unfruitful. But towards the close of the eighth year, 1873, a promising

commencement had been made in no less than six out-stations, with a total membership of fifty-three converts, besides several candidates for baptism, and inquirers.

Looking back upon the story of those days, certain workers stand out among the native Christians as specially noteworthy, because specially owned of GOD. One of these, Fong Neng-kuei, was intimately connected with our Mission's early days in CHEH-KIANG. He was one of the first converts that gladdened the hearts of Mr. Jones and Mr. Hudson Taylor in the commencement of their Ningpo work; and up to the time of his death he proved an invaluable helper. His was distinctly the gift of an evangelist. Little native churches were raised up almost wherever he went. Pastors and teachers were needed to supplement his efforts, but when they came Neng-kuei was always ready to go on to districts yet unreached. His story is well worth recording.

NENG-KUEI AND HIS FRIENDS.

Born in a village near Fung-hwa, Neng-kuei was brought up without any educational advantages. He was early apprenticed to a basket-maker in the rough country district of Ong-zih, amongst whose populous towns he was destined to preach CHRIST in later years.

His apprenticeship over, the young journeyman married, but only one year later a heavy shadow fell across his pathway in the death of his young wife.

"Poor Neng-kuei," wrote Mr. Crombie; "he could speak no word of comfort to her as she was passing out into the darkness of the unknown future, for he had not then heard

of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. She died without hope; as millions, alas! are dying in China year by year."

His home broken up, Neng-kuei removed to Ningpo, where he found regular work, and, still better, discovered the "Jesus-hall."

"Every evening you can go," his new companions told him. "The foreign teachers welcome everybody. They show coloured pictures, and tell you all about them. It is really amusing."

Neng-kuei went, and sure enough there were the coloured pictures. The room was full, and the subject of both picture and address was the old story of the Prodigal Son. The thought of GOD as a Father, and with a father's heart, was entirely new to most of those present, and many remained behind for conversation.

"Let us stay to ask more about this teaching," suggested Neng-kuei to his basket-maker friends.

Two of them assented; stayed and talked, and came regularly, night by night, listening with growing appreciation to the Truth. By-and-by an evening school was commenced, to teach the Romanised colloquial to any who wished to read the Scriptures. The basket-makers gladly joined, and were very diligent.

"They are turning Christians," said the neighbours. And bitter opposition began.

Could they stand the test? Not all. First one and then another was missed from class and meeting, but Neng-kuei still held on. He was out-and-out in earnest, and soon boldly professed himself a follower of JESUS, was baptised, and received into the Church.

"You will not work on Sunday?" exclaimed his employer: "well, you will lose your pay."

This meant the sacrifice of at least a third of Neng-kuei's little income. His master did not particularly object, know-

ing that the clever workman could do all that there was to be done in six days' labour, where another man would have taken seven. The wages had been low enough before—only twopence a day and his food; but now he had, out of his reduced receipts, the extra expense of purchasing provisions for Sunday, which could not cost less than two or three pence.

The busy season came round, and Neng-kuei found himself one morning at the house of some grandees. The simple Christian workman stood in the audience hall. There was a sound of approaching footsteps, a rustle of silken garments, and through the curtained archway entered a dainty group—the *T'a-t'a*, or great ladies of the house.

"You are the basket-maker?"

Their directions were soon given. Incense holders were required, which Neng-kuei was to make.

"*Feh neng keo.* I cannot!" replied the journeyman. "I am a Christian. I belong to the *Yia-su Kiao*, and no longer worship idols. I cannot make or sell anything for idolatrous purposes."

Amusement followed surprise. "*Hyi-gyi!*" Can it be that a poor basket-maker, a common working man, has a conscience opposed to his own interests? The fair aristocrats were quite curious. They asked him many questions, and Neng-kuei made the best of his opportunity to tell the story of the Cross to the dainty, perfumed ladies, who he felt, after all, were but needy, sinful women in GOD'S sight. Their position made it unlikely that such a message would reach them in any other way; but they did not seem much interested, soon grew tired of listening, and tripped away on their tiny feet.

"What was that you were saying?"

Neng-kuei looked round and met a searching glance, half incredulous, half expectant, wholly earnest. A man in working clothes was standing by him.

"You did not see me? I am painting here," he said, indicating some decorations he was doing in the room the ladies had just left. "What was it you were saying? I heard; but tell it me once more." The good seed of the Kingdom had found here its "good ground."

To the nobles it had seemed an idle tale: to this poor painter Neng-kuei's words had been a revelation.

More than thirty years have gone since that day, and the basket-maker has long since ceased from his earthly toil, but Wang Lae-djün, the painter, who through him first heard of CHRIST, is to this present hour devotedly serving the LORD he loves, and as senior pastor of the Hang-chau church maintains an undimmed testimony to the saving and the keeping grace of GOD.

The story reads so simply—just a few minutes' telling of one's faith, and a soul led to GOD. But very far from easy was the life that lay behind. Matters looked dark enough at times for the faithful basket-maker.

Not long after this trade was good, and his master became very busy. Toward the end of the week he called in Neng-kuei.

"I cannot now spare you one day in seven," he said decidedly. "You must come to work next Sunday, or lose your place with me."

"But we agreed——"

"I do not mind what we agreed."

"But the soul needs care as well as the body."

"Who knows about the soul? If you do not choose to come, you may consider yourself dismissed."

"I must do my duty towards GOD," simply replied Neng-kuei.

Monday morning came. It was no use going to the

workshop, and Neng-kuei had to seek employment elsewhere. But to his dismay he found that his former master, determined to compel him to accept his terms, had been round to all the basket-makers in the city, and persuaded them not to take on the man he had dismissed. Every door was closed against the Christian, and all his efforts at obtaining work proved vain.

"Satan is setting hard at me," said Neng-kuei to himself. "But if he prevents my getting work I shall only have the more time to snatch others from his kingdom."

So he went straight to a tea-shop to preach the Gospel. The place was crowded. Neng-kuei sat down and began to deliver his message. As he spoke his faith was strengthened; his own burden became lighter while he sought to lighten the burdens of others; and dwelling upon the love of GOD, and His power and willingness to bless, all personal troubles, by degrees, vanished away.

Some of the people listened with attention, amongst them a farmer from the country—old Wang of Ho-si.

"I want to learn more of this new, strange religion," he said when Neng-kuei had done.

"You can learn," answered Neng-kuei, "but only from the Word of GOD. You must read for yourself its teachings."

"Alas!" said the old man, "I do not know how to read, and am now too stupid to learn."

"Not so," replied his new friend; "for with the Gospel GOD has given us an easy method of reading also.* I, at first, did not know a single character, not even the figure one! but now I am able to read the Scriptures and the hymn-book as well. If you like, I will gladly teach you."

The old farmer was delighted; and soon removed from his lodgings to the home of his new-found friend. That

* Referring to the Romanised colloquial, introduced by the missionaries.

very day he commenced with the Romanised alphabet, and mastered some six letters, learning also "the way of Truth more perfectly."

Next morning Neng-kuei again sought for work, and this time successfully; for though the basket-makers of the town had promised his master to refuse him employment on Monday, on Tuesday they were glad enough to avail themselves of his deft services with a clear conscience!

"The LORD has been so good to me," he said to Mr. Taylor. "I have got work again, and have snatched a soul from the devil in between. Here he is, Wang of Ho-si."

The introduction done, he left the old farmer with the missionaries, to relate his own affairs.

"It was a strange story he told us," wrote Mr. Taylor; "one to which at the time we scarcely gave credence.

"Some six or seven months before he had been very ill; every one thought him at the point of death. One day he was left alone in the house, all his family being out at work, when he distinctly heard himself called by name. Wide awake, and perfectly conscious, he looked round for the speaker, but saw no one. Feeling very uncomfortable, he got out of bed, and unable from weakness to cross the room, crept to the door by the help of furniture and walls. But on looking out he was even more perplexed, for still there was no one to be seen. Back into bed again he crept, wondering if he could have been mistaken, when he heard the voice a second time! Again he crawled out to the door. Again—no one. Alarmed, he feebly made his way back, and buried his face beneath the coverlet, now thinking that the voice he heard must be the summons of death, and dreading to see some hideous apparition come to drag away his spirit, he knew not whither."

Just inside the entrance of many Buddhist temples stand two abnormally hideous and colossal figures

robed in white and with sea-green hands and faces, representing the evil genii into whose hand the spirit passed at death. From childhood the Chinese regard them with terror, and it was no doubt some such apparition that the old man feared.

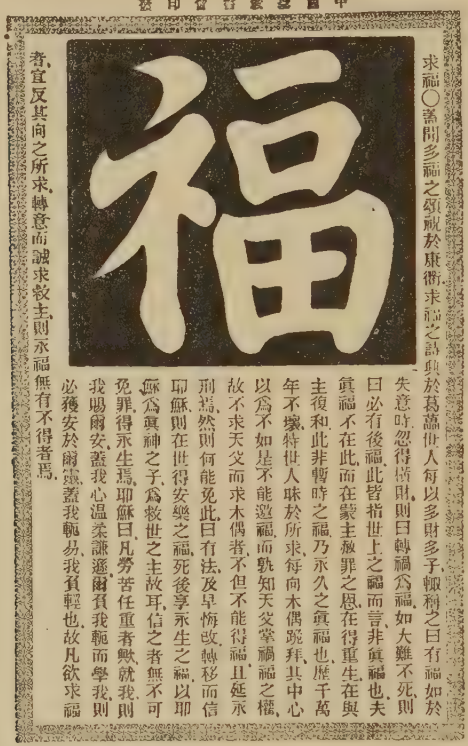
"Instead of this, however, he heard the voice a third time, and it went on quietly to direct him to make an infusion of some simple herb that would cure his complaint; and to go, upon recovery, to the city of Ningpo, where he would learn of a new religion which he was to follow.

"When the family came home he got some one to make him the herb tea, by the use of which he speedily recovered; and when strengthened he did come to Ningpo. Having no other method of obtaining a livelihood he supported himself as a grass-cutter.*

"He had been thus employed for some months in the city, but had never heard the Gospel. As soon as he met with Neng-kuei, however, in the tea-shop, he concluded that this must be the new religion he had been directed to seek.

"Upon first hearing this story we thought that probably the old man had some interested motive in coming to us; being engaged perhaps in a lawsuit, or wanting employment. But however this might be, he was willing to learn to read the Scriptures; and the Word of God has saved many a one who first commenced its study from unworthy motives. So we encouraged him to persevere, and he did; but long before he had mastered the difficulties of reading our fears

* There is no meadow-land nor pasturage in China, and grass-cutting has become a trade. The cutters seek grass that grows about the banks of canals, under and upon the city walls, around grave mounds, etc., and sell it to those who keep horses, or use cattle in their fields or mills.



GOSPEL TRACT, WITH LARGE CHARACTER FOR "HAPPINESS."

were gone, and we all felt that we were dealing with a true, though possibly a peculiar man. He soon professed faith in the Gospel, and after due probation was received into our little native church with great joy. Thus was led to CHRIST, Wang Kiao-yiao, the indefatigable evangelist, now labouring in the neighbourhood of Ho-si."

When in 1859 Mr. Hudson Taylor assumed the temporary charge of the Ningpo hospital, desiring to

give the patients the benefit of Christian example as well as precept, he was led to substitute converted native helpers for the heathen *employés* of the place Among those engaged were Neng-kuei the basket-maker, and his friends, Lae-djün, the painter, and the old farmer Wang. They all served the LORD most faithfully, talking in their spare time with those who wished to hear the Gospel, and teaching any who desired it to read. During eight or nine months nearly fifty persons were brought to the LORD through their efforts, many of whom still continue in His service.

Old Wang returned to his native village, Ho-si, to carry to his family and friends the Glad Tidings he had received. But no one would believe his story.

"The old man has gone out of his mind!" they said. And the more earnest he became the more they laughed.

After several years, however, truth prevailed, and when in 1867 Mr. Crombie took charge of Ho-si as a Fung-hwa out-station, he found there a little church of nine members, including old Wang's wife, son, and daughter, five others waiting for baptism, and several hopeful inquirers. Within a radius of ten miles from the house of the old farmer there was scarcely an adult who had not heard the Gospel from his lips.

He and his wife had set apart one of the rooms in their own house for Divine worship. Nicely cleaned, whitewashed, and fitted up as a little chapel, this

room was a regular meeting-place for the neighbourhood, and a centre of real blessing. Before long this worthy couple had the joy of seeing their son a preacher of the Gospel in the neighbouring city of Ning-hai. The mother now sleeps in JESUS, but the old farmer himself, though over seventy years of age, is still hale and vigorous, and labouring on faithfully at Ho-si.

The history of the basket-maker, Neng-kuei, had one sad episode. When in 1861 the T'ai-p'ing rebels took Ningpo, he was induced to enter their employ. "Evil communications" had their usual result, and the young convert was led into sin, which resulted in his suspension from Church fellowship. How far he wandered no one ever really knew, nor how he ultimately effected his escape from the rebel band. Through hardships, danger, and through real repentance, he found his way back by the waste and stony desert that every prodigal must tread with weary feet who turns from the far country to seek his Father's house. After a time he was restored to communion; and ever since has manifested the same zeal for the conversion of souls that characterised his first love. He subsequently laboured under Mr. Crombie in his native district of Ong-zih, one of the earliest of the Fung-hwa out-stations, where much blessing attended his work.

Beautifully situated among the mountains, about forty miles to the south of Fung-hwa, lies the busy city of Ning-hai, almost within sight of the broken

coast line and the sea. Here, in the summer of 1868, Mr. Crombie was enabled to open another preaching station, in connection with which a good work was subsequently developed.

"I shall not soon forget," writes Mr. Hudson Taylor, "my first visit to this city. We had no station there then, nor were there any Christians in the place. As we approached the wall, a funeral came out by one of the gates. We stood aside to let it pass.

"'Alas! remarked the native brother with me sadly, 'if the Gospel were to reach Ning-hai to-day it would come too late for that poor soul!'

"Yes, and to how many more it will come *too late*! Tens, hundreds, thousands are passing away from towns and villages in this particular district, not to speak of many another in which the need is even greater, without ever having heard the name of JESUS.

The Ning-hai* native Christians were carefully trained in the Scriptures by Mr. and Mrs. Crombie, and took an intelligent interest in the progress of the LORD'S work abroad—or, as we should say, at home.

"I still can see them gathered," continues Mr. Taylor, "as they were many an evening.

"The service is ended, but the members of the little congregation do not seem inclined to disperse.

* From Ning-hai the good work spread still farther southwards, and in the summer of 1873 a room was rented in the city of Tien-t'ai, and a preacher stationed there. Interest was aroused, and blessing given; and the little church thus formed still continues to grow in numbers and usefulness.

"'Is the work good in the Northern stations?' they ask. 'Are you meeting with encouragement up there? And are not more missionaries coming out to labour amongst our own populous valleys?'

"It is quite evident that they mean to have a missionary meeting in addition to the ordinary service to-night.

"'How are Mr. Moo and Mr. Sang getting on?' is the next question. 'Have you any recent news of them?'

"Mr. Moo and Mr. Sang? Whoever can they be? We have no missionaries of the name. But just now one of the old men in prayer asked GOD to bless these persons, and to use them to the conversion of some who might come out to China and preach the Gospel. The work of Messrs. Moody and Sankey—for to these evangelists our Chinese friends refer—has been followed with great interest by some of these dear Christians.

"'Ah!' said one of them, 'the Opium Traffic will soon be stopped if so many people are being converted in England.'

"Would that there were more probability of that hope being realised!"

CHAPTER VI.

"THE LAME TAKE THE PREY."

'REGARDING THIS FOREIGNER, STOTT, CHEH-KIANG AND FUH-KIEN ARE WRITTEN ON HIS PASSPORT. HE MAY TRAVEL IN THESE PROVINCES, BUT HE IS NOT PERMITTED SECRETLY TO DO ANY BUSINESS. WHY DOES HE DECEIVE THE PEOPLE INTO RENTING HIM HOUSES? HE SAYS HE IS TO PREACH ABOUT A RELIGION. HE HAS OPENED A CHARITY SCHOOL TO DECEIVE BOYS, AND SECRETLY POISON THEM. SUCH AMAZING WICKEDNESS AND DECEITFUL TALK IS, IN COMPARISON WITH THE WHITE WATER-LILY RELIGION, STILL MORE DESPICABLE. THEREFORE, FELLOW-CITIZENS, WITH UNITED EFFORT DRIVE HIM OUT; DON'T SUFFER HIM TO DWELL. FELLOW BRETHREN, WITH ONE HEART AND MIND, DRIVE HIM OUT; PULL DOWN HIS HOUSE, EVEN ONE PIECE OF TIMBER DON'T ALLOW TO STAND UP. SO THAT THE PLACE MAY HAVE GOOD LUCK AND THE PEOPLE ALSO, BECAUSE OF THIS INFORMATION. THE WHOLE CITY GIVES CONSENT."

So ran the placard on the city walls. One anticipates as much in China missions. But "regarding *this* foreigner, Stott," one would scarcely have expected so forcible and detailed a denunciation. He was alone. He was completely undefended. He was lame. What should Wun-chau, with its wealth and dignity, its hundred thousand inhabitants and exalted position as capital of a prefecture containing over a million, fear from this single help-

less foreigner on crutches? Rather might he tremble before its fulminations.

"Are you really prepared to face *China*?" Mr. Taylor had asked him long ago in England, when Stott had volunteered. "It might go hardly with you in a city riot: you could not run away!"

"Oh," the young man replied quietly, "running away was not in my thoughts. I had quite expected that the lame should take the prey." *

Many difficulties had gathered around him since that day. Wun-chau, which had become his centre in 1867, was anti-foreign in its prejudices; and though the people generally were well disposed, a certain section did what they could to misrepresent his purposes and hinder the work. More than once trouble arose, and the crippled man's life and property were threatened by an angry mob. Yet, confident in the power of the Gospel, George Stott held calmly on, still always "quite expecting that the lame should take the prey."

How could he leave his duty? In all Wun-chau city and prefecture, he was the only messenger of JESUS. His lame feet alone were "beautiful upon the mountains" . . . bringing glad tidings of peace.

At one time roughs broke into the little mission-house. "You shall leave our city without delay!" they cried. Facing the angry mob, he said quite calmly, "You see I am lame. I cannot run away. If you kill me you will probably be called to account;

* See vol. i., pp. 244, 347, etc.

whereas if you let me alone you will find me harmless. I have come here only for your good."

Astonished and perplexed by his courage, the crowd retired.

So the lame man with the charmed life worked on. GOD'S strength was made perfect in his weakness; and when he went home to heaven on Easter Sunday, April 1889, after twenty-three years of devoted and successful service, Wun-chau lost one of its best known and most respected citizens; and hundreds of Christian believers, gathered into churches he had been enabled to establish, mourned his death as that of a father indeed.

He is gone now, and here we can but put together a few scattered memories of a life that was fragrant, a life whose single purpose he himself clearly uttered :—

"*This is what we live for, and what we pray and hope for—to lead souls to* CHRIST. *If we fail in this, our lives are a failure; if successful here, then our lives are a success. We want to lay up riches for eternity, and to put jewels in the Saviour's crown.*"

They were uphill days to begin with.

"Once," wrote Mr. Stott, "I fell very short of funds, so much so that I had not a single dollar in my possession. I was absolutely without money for fully three weeks, and had nearly twenty people in the house. How were they to be fed? . . . It is one of our well-known principles never to incur debt, no matter what may happen. My money has all gone, and our supplies also were nearly exhausted.

Well, just at this time, a man of whom I had bought rice on several occasions came to me and said :—

"'Mr. Stott, how is it you have not been in to order rice of late? Yours must be nearly done.'

"'The rice is almost finished,' I answered, 'but I cannot order any more just now.'

"'Why?' queried my friend.

"'Well, if you must know, simply because I have no money to pay for it.'

"Soon after that the man sent us, as a gift, two loads of rice, and three thousand cash, equal in value to ten or twelve shillings.

"Before very long, however, this also was at an end, and the money spent; and still no help had reached me. But when these supplies were exhausted the same kind friend again met our need. Words would fail to tell the joy I had in GOD during those days. I shall remember, I think, as long as life remains, how I have sat sometimes for hours together alone in my room, and lifted up my heart to Him, and felt almost like stretching out my hands to embrace the dear LORD JESUS CHRIST. I certainly had some of the nearest approaches to GOD during those twenty-one days that I have ever experienced. My heart was kept in perfect peace. I think I never once doubted that help would come. But while waiting thus, before I had received it, a letter reached me from Mr. Berger, with the information that the lady who was to become my wife had already started from England, and by the time the news arrived would probably be more than half-way on her journey to China. Some perhaps might think that this was not a very bright prospect upon which to marry. But GOD was faithful still; and before the vessel could reach Shanghai all my needs were abundantly supplied."

It was early in 1870 that Miss Ciggie arrived, and

from that time Mr. Stott was no longer single-handed. Full of hope and courage, and with many bright anticipations for the future, the young couple returned from Ningpo, after their marriage, to the sphere which they believed appointed them of GOD. Nothing but this deep sense of their Divine call to the work of evangelising Wun-chau could have sustained them through the years that followed, or kept them from fleeing, again and again, when their lives were in imminent danger, and all hope of peaceful settlement in the city seemed gone.

At the time of the Tien-tsin massacre every effort was made to eject them.

"Crowds of excited people came daily," he wrote, "and wandered all over the place, examining closely every corner to find traces of children's bodies said to be packed away in boxes.

"'How many of your companions have been compounded into medicine?' our schoolboys were asked many times a day.

"'Such talk is rubbish,' they answered. But no one believed them.

"Sometimes a compassionate man would sigh deeply, and remark, 'Poor boys! How much to be pitied! You see he has drugged them, too. What terrible medicine it must be that so blinds them to their danger!'

"When the excitement became general, I had to call on the Mandarin and request a proclamation, which he gave. It had a quieting effect on the crowds, and by-and-by we were able to move about more freely."

Towards the end of 1870 Mr. Jackson came to help in Wun-chau, and a new chapel was opened. From that time the work began to look more hopeful.

The people seemed less prejudiced, and not a few heard the Word gladly.

Brightest among the early converts was one man who had been a fortune-teller. Religiously inclined, he had tried almost every system of belief within his knowledge, but without finding peace of heart. He seemed to receive the Gospel the first time he heard it, and it gave him rest. His earnestness in telling the good news to others was a great encouragement. Sometimes in the chapel, unable to restrain the fulness of his heart, he would come up to the platform and ask to be allowed to speak; and often in the silence of night he was known to spend hours in prayer. His geomancy was abandoned; his sibylline books burned; and for a time he had great difficulty in supporting his wife and children. After his baptism he became Mr. Jackson's most useful assistant.

Another interesting conversion, proving the power of CHRIST to break even the strongest fetters, was that of a Buddhist priest who became a bright, true Christian.

Passing along the streets of Wun-chau, this man's attention was first attracted by the ever-open bookshop. He ventured in to look at the foreign literature, made some purchases, and asked many questions about the religion of JESUS. The native assistant did not attach much importance to his apparent interest, thinking it all but impossible for a man in his position to receive the Truth. But later on the priest came again.

"I want to buy some more books,' he said gravely. "I, too, believe in CHRIST."

It was true. Relinquishing his livelihood in the idol temple, he supported himself as a farmer in his native village—a humble follower of the Nazarene.

He came frequently to Wun-chau, asking to be received into the church ; and after due probation was accepted and baptised, his life giving cause for unmixed thankfulness. One stormy day, he was on his way by passenger boat to attend the Communion service of the coming Sabbath in the city, bringing with him two idols to present to the missionaries. A gale arose, and within sight of Wun-chau the boat was suddenly capsized. Twenty-six of the passengers, including this dear brother, were lost.

Probably none of Mr. Stott's undertakings proved more fruitful than his boys' school. This training ground for Christian lads had been one of his first efforts, and grew into quite a spiritual nursery. Almost all the best helpers connected with the later developments of that now extensive work trace the dawn of their spiritual life to the time when they came under the kindly influences of the school.

One of the first boys who gave much sign of promise was a poor, delicate, orphan lad, brought to Mr. Stott by his elder brother, a confirmed opium smoker. He was about fifteen, and partially paralysed, "a ragged, blank-faced boy with straw sandals." We have before given, in Mr. Stott's own words, the story of his remarkable mental and spiritual development, and the bright Christian testimony he bore as years passed on,* when the

* Vol. i., p. 351.

poor, crippled, destitute boy became, by the grace of GOD, a man of rare gifts, and still rarer grace. He has now for many years ably filled the office of pastor in the Wun-chau church, respected and beloved alike by all who know him.

Of another of the boys in this school Mr. Stott records a pleasant little story that shows how much, even in China, a child's testimony may be used for JESUS.

"This little fellow was one day watching the crowds of people engaged in their devotions in a large idol temple. His attention was particularly attracted by one old man who was busy worshipping and chanting prayers before all the idols in turn. The boy went up and stood beside him, and when an opportunity occurred, he said,—

"'Venerable grandfather,' a term of great respect, 'these idols cannot see you, or hear the prayers you offer. Why not worship the living GOD in heaven, who has given you food and raiment all these years, and by whose power and goodness we live?'

"The old man seemed startled, and gazing earnestly at the lad, he said,—

"'Where can I go to find such a Being?'

"The boy then quoted a Chinese proverb, which runs, '*Three feet above your head is GOD!*' and went on to tell about the love that sent JESUS to be our Substitute. The old man caught at the word 'Substitute' as if he felt that that was what he needed. He came with the lad to our Mission-house, and the native preacher talked to him, at length. Day after day he returned to hear more and finally took away his belongings from the temple in which he was staying, and brought them to the chapel, where he remained for a time.

"'This doctrine is really precious,' he said to the lad one day. 'I must let my old wife hear it. You come with me, and tell the old mother all you have said to me.'

"They went, and the boy found the 'old mother' quite as easy to instruct as her husband had been; and with this advantage, that she had a better memory, and so recollected more clearly the truths she heard. He told them that they ought to thank GOD for their food before every meal, and taught them what to say. Sometimes the 'old father' would forget, but the 'old mother' always reminded him, even after he had begun to eat, upon which he would promptly lay down his basin of rice, and chopsticks, and ask GOD to forgive him for forgetting before proceeding with his usual blessing.

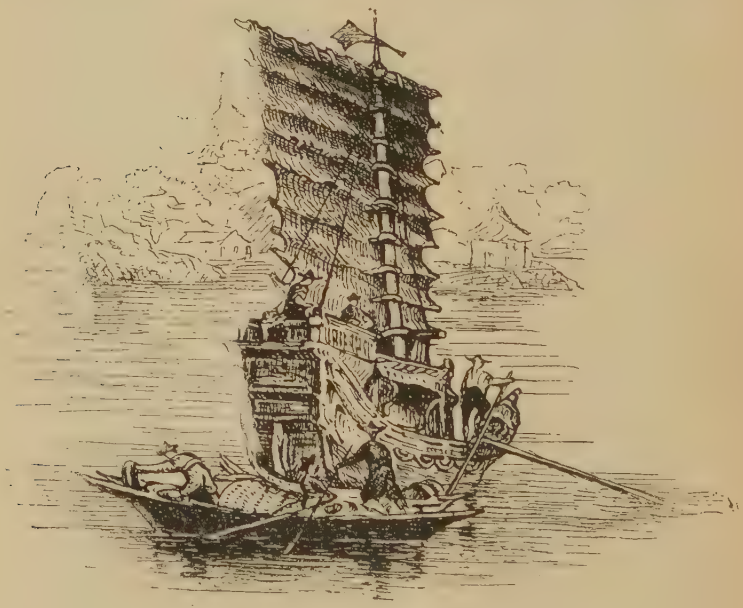
"He and the 'old mother' have taken a great liking for the boy. They are not poor people, and have treated him very kindly. He has been to their house twice, and the old man has been here several times. I like him much, and think he is sincere. We earnestly pray that the Truth may find a lasting lodgment in his heart, and in that of his aged wife also."

A prayer that was fully answered, for both these dear old people became earnest Christians, joined the Church, and after a consistent walk and testimony entered peacefully into rest. The lad who was the means of leading them to JESUS is now with them in the presence of the King. He grew up to be a useful helper. But a cold, caught while preaching in the open air, led to consumption, and in 1887 he died, leaving a bright testimony to the keeping grace of GOD.

Self-diffusive, like light or heat, the Gospel once fairly planted in any given spot has a tendency to spread far beyond its original bounds. It would be sad indeed if its quickening efficacy were confined

to cities where the missionary is found. By the young converts it is usually carried abroad, and often may be working in distant places long before the foreign teacher is at all aware of it.

Little more than five years after Mr. Stott first settled in Wun-chau, and when the believers there were still comparatively few, tidings reached him that some had received the Gospel in the neighbouring city of Bing-yae—an important place, distant about fifty miles, and situated in the midst of a populous plain. From a high hill beyond the city the mountainous boundary of the neighbouring pro-



A CHINESE JUNK, FULL SAIL.

vince of FUH-KIEN can be descried, and not far away, eastward, lie the coast and the island-studded sea, broken into narrow inlets and charming bays, and open to the distant reaches of the broad ocean's ebb and flow. In Bing-yae Mr. Stott found two disciples of CHRIST—a scholar and a shopkeeper—desiring baptism. From this little beginning developed a promising work. Towards the close of 1874 an out-station was opened there, and after some years a foreign missionary was assigned to the district. Very many souls have since been gathered in, and the church now numbers over a hundred members.

At Dong-ling, another out-station opened subsequently, there are now about two hundred converts; and every Sunday, in districts from two to more than twenty miles distant from Wun-chau, the Gospel is being preached by native evangelists, of whom the majority are unpaid.

One very cheering development during recent years has been the large and encouraging work amongst women and girls that has grown up around Mrs. Stott and her helpers. To reach the women of Wun-chau seemed at first a hopeless task. Timid, prejudiced by atrocious rumours, and far too afraid of the missionary's wife to venture near the station, nothing would persuade them to come to her; and it was long ere she could gain an entrance into their houses for even the briefest visit. Patiently and prayerfully Mrs. Stott worked on, until by degrees she was able

to make her way with comparative freedom in all parts of the city; but at the end of seven years it was sad indeed to realise that only one woman had been led to believe in JESUS.

At that time Mrs. Stott accompanied her husband upon a much-needed furlough. While in England she constantly sought prayer for the women of Wun-chau, and upon returning in 1878, great was her joy to find "two who seemed interested." These, and the one Christian, formed her little congregation, and she began to teach them regularly, going week by week to their homes. This meant no less than three cottage meetings, with a united audience of only five! But Mrs. Stott was not discouraged. Hopefully and steadily she persevered, until at last her prayers were more than answered, and she could say of three of this little company,—

"They were the finest Christian women I have known anywhere; a perfect joy to me."

Subsequently these bright young converts became, in their turn, earnest soul-winners, and the nucleus of a large and increasing band of women, that now gladden the hearts of those who so long and patiently laboured for their salvation.

Of his own more recent efforts in Wun-chau, Mr. Stott used to say that he had specially sought to fulfil the duties of a pastor, endeavouring, as far as possible, to make the natives evangelists. As little churches were formed in outlying districts, he visited them month by month; but one of his guiding

principles always was :—"Never open a station if you can help it ; rather leave new places to open themselves."

Inadequately, at best, can this brief survey picture the life of the lame preacher of Wun-chau, a man God-sent and God-honoured. His post was a hard one. After eight years of suffering and service in that great heathen city he still bore at times the name of "the hated foreigner."

"I learn," he wrote in 1875, "that my name has been given in to the officials in conjunction with those of certain coiners of false money, who, when they were caught, declared that I had a large share in the matter, and all the city is consequently in a ferment.

"Such reports greatly retard the progress of the work. I hardly think that any could go beyond these poor Chinese in evil speaking. Not long ago, for instance, a money shop was robbed—at the instigation of the foreigner! Then a rumour got abroad that the foreigner had predicted that a great calamity was to overtake the south gate quarter. Many families moved away, and when the dreaded night arrived most of the people sat up worshipping their idols. Then a succession of fires occurred, with which, as rumour had it, the hated foreigner was concerned, having predicted that the quarter between the east and west gates of the city would be burned down. If a murder or a robbery has taken place, the perpetrators are certainly hid in the foreigner's house, and the Mandarins must not go in to look for them. All the year round such rumours as these, and many a hundred times worse, are abroad. I sometimes wonder if they will ever weary, or fail of material to talk about.

"One Sunday afternoon, when preaching in the chapel to a large audience, I looked once or twice at my watch. Some one asked his neighbour what it was that I took out of my pocket, and what I was looking at it for? Another replied that it was a 'hocus-pocus instrument,' by which I could tell how many people, and to what extent, would be 'hocussed' by my preaching; and that when the desired number had been 'hocussed' to the desired extent I should stop! I did not know of this until some time afterwards, when I went to the country and found the district full of it. No one unacquainted with the Chinese could understand the force of such nonsense upon the people. The wilder the reports the more eagerly they are believed.

"For some weeks past I have spent several hours every day in the chapel, and have met men from almost every part of the district. They have just gathered in a bountiful harvest, and have come to the city to buy clothing, etc., for their families. As they pass along the street they cannot but see me sitting in the chapel, and many come in to look at the barbarian. Thus I obtain frequent opportunities of speaking for JESUS, and numbers of these men carry away with them our Christian books and tracts. Amongst those who thus come and listen to the Truth, many would gladly know more, but do not get another opportunity. I hope to take the names and addresses of the most promising, and get some one to find them out who will try to lead them to the Saviour.

"This is what we live for, and what we pray and hope for—to lead souls to CHRIST. If we fail in this our lives are a failure; if successful here, then our lives are a success. We want to lay up riches for Eternity, and to put jewels in the Saviour's crown.

"It is one of my greatest enjoyments, a luxury unknown in England, when the moon is nearly full, to sit for an

hour or so in the courtyard with the dear natives, and have quiet talk with our faces heavenward.

"What this great, good land would be, if inhabited by a Christian people, who can tell? But as it is, the curse rests heavily upon it. Many of the customs of the people are of a very degrading nature. But the Chinese, if only Christianised, are capable of doing and of being much. What a blessed thing to see the two hundred and fifty millions of this great people all worshipping and serving CHRIST JESUS as LORD and SAVIOUR! Oh, when shal' that day dawn?"

CHAPTER VII.

PIONEERS IN GAN-HWUY AND KIANG-SI.

ABOVE is heaven, below Hang-chau and Su-chau. Thus concisely the Chinese proverb summarises things celestial and terrestrial in seven words, which in the Empire of the East leave nothing to be desired. To Western minds, unfortunately, while heaven is clearly evident, Hang-chau is not quite so apparent or self-assertive. Readers of our first volume will recollect the city with its mediæval fame and modern population of over half a million—with, too, its little household on the Sin-k'ai Lung, where the pilgrim tent of the Inland Mission was pitched for the first time.* The little church that sprung up there was long and ably guided by Mr. J. McCarthy, and when in 1872 he was called farther afield it passed into the care of the devoted Wang Lae-djün—first of the C. I. M. churches under a purely native pastorate.

On the accompanying sketch-map Hang-chau will be seen near the famous city of Ningpo, in the comparatively well-evangelised province of CHEH-KIANG, where the Inland Mission found its *pied-à-terre*. Directly beyond it, inland, lie the great provinces of GAN-HWUY and KIANG-SI. Our last three chapters

* Vol. i, pp. 288-300, etc.

SKETCH MAP OF GAN-HWUY AND KIANG-SI.

have touched upon early developments in some of the first mission centres in CHEH-KIANG. In this we take a brief glance at pioneering efforts in these great spheres immediately beyond.

Pioneers in GAN-HWUY and KIANG-SI. How much the words recall! Again stands out before us that lonely, rugged figure, Duncan, the tall young Scotchman, whose race so soon was run.* His was

* Vol. i., pp. 339-346.

the privilege of opening Nan-king, the second largest city in China, to the Gospel, the honour of first bringing to this mighty southern capital news of the redemption of "all men every where." His was the onerous duty, later on, of also maintaining work in the capital of GAN-HWUY, a fortnight's journey westward; the solemn responsibility of being at Nan-king the only missionary in a city numbering half a million people, and in GAN-HWUY the only labourer in a vast province peopled with ten million souls.* Scarcely six years of labour, and he was called away. Failing health compelled him to take the journey home. Unfit to stay, but most unwilling to leave his little flock without a shepherd, he sailed one autumn day in 1872.

"I shall come back to China," was his hope and his conviction. But GOD willed otherwise.

Surrounded on all hands by heathen crime and

* Gan-king, the capital of GAN-HWUY, was entered with the Gospel by Messrs. Meadows and Williamson in 1868 (see vol. i., p. 389). In 1871 failing health and other claims necessitated the departure of these first workers to the coast.

"Poor GAN-HWUY, nearly as large as England, and very populous, without one single church, chapel, or meeting-house, excepting our solitary station at the capital; without one Christian day school or Sunday School; without one book-shop where copies of GOD'S Word could be purchased; poor, needy GAN-HWUY, had to lose, for the time being, its *only* missionary. Mr. Duncan, of Nan-king, undertook to give half or more of his time to superintend the work of a native helper at Gan-king, and to itinerate in the province as far as circumstances would permit. More than this we were unable to do from want of men."—From *Occasional Paper*, No. 30.

darkness, his little band of Christians held fast to their new faith. But their first friend and teacher, the man who, in GOD'S strength, had done and suffered so much that they might know of CHRIST, never returned again to work amongst them.

Almost to the last his great desire and expectation was that he might go back once more to China ; and towards the closing hours, when his mind wandered slightly, he would fancy himself there, and spoke of some of the natives by name.

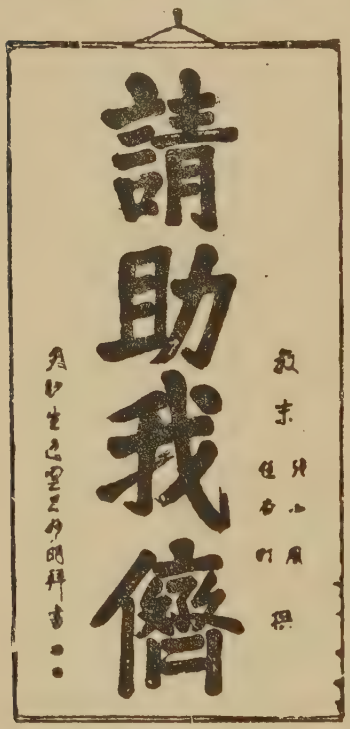
But as GOD reckons service, George Duncan's work was done, though he was only twenty-nine when he died.*

Mr. McCarthy, of Hang-chau, was called to take his place, and settled at Gan-king, now among the best known of all our Mission centres, and the seat of the young men's Training Home. It was a small church in those days, but one that soon developed† through his labours and those of his native helpers, one of whom was the devoted Tsiu Sien-seng of Ningpo. Ta-t'ung, two days' boat journey down the Yang-tsi, was occupied early in 1873 ; and a few months later the busy city of Wu-hu, still farther along the great river. In the autumn of 1874 the work was again extended, and T'ai-p'ing and Ch'i-chau, two

* At Torquay, on February 12th, 1872, of rapid consumption.

† Four of the Hang-chau out-stations, bordering upon, or actually within the province of GAN-HWUY, were transferred to the supervision of Gan-king ; the two most important of which, Hwuy-chau and Kwang-teh-chau, are now worked as separate stations, with resident missionaries of their own.

important prefectural cities that had both suffered severely during the troubles of the rebellion, were reached. Baptisms at Wu-hu cheered the missionaries; and as Mr. McCarthy travelled from place to place in his large parish he found good openings for the Gospel, and not a little to encourage in the near future of the work. It was a parish worth spending time and strength upon—a sphere that we commend to the consideration of volunteers for the home ministry. He was the only pastor among ten million souls. His charge was the whole province of GAN-HWUY, where for sixteen years the China Inland Mission laboured alone for GOD.



COME OVER AND HELP US.

Such were the pioneers of GAN-HWUY.

Populous KIANG-SI, its neighbour to the south, was also the scene of wide-spread itinerations at this time. Finely situated upon the Yang-tsi river, about five hundred miles above Shanghai, the important

city of Kiu-kiang gives access to the interior of this far-reaching and beautiful province, upon whose northern boundary it stands. The Rev. V. C. Hart, an American missionary, had been first to commence permanent efforts in this place, and for some time after Mr. Cardwell followed him in 1869, they were the only Protestant workers in the whole province—a region far larger than England and Wales, containing a population of not less than fifteen millions. Two missionaries, and at the most eleven native Christians—altogether not one man to a million of the heathen around them! Well might they meet weekly for prayer, realising how great was the task before them, and their need of Divine wisdom and strength.

KIANG-SI'S pioneers did their best to compass the wide charge that fell to their lot. During 1871 and 1872 Mr. Cardwell made three long evangelistic journeys to the far south, east, and west, visiting more than a hundred cities, towns, and villages, in none of which—as far as he could tell—had the Gospel ever been proclaimed. He sold upon these journeys more than fifteen thousand Scripture portions and tracts, many being purchased by literary men and officials. He stayed twice at Nan-ch'ang Fu, the capital, travelling down the Kan river as far as to Wan-gan Hien; turned westward eight days' journey towards the HU-NAN border, up a rocky river full of rapids, to the little town of Yung-sin beautifully situated at the foot of a treble range of hills running up six thousand

feet in height ; visited the important cities of Kih-gan, Lin-kiang, and Fu-chau ; and explored also the Po-yang lake, and the Kwang-sin river giving access to the eastern portions of the province.

In the spring of 1872, several candidates for baptism cheered Mr. Cardwell's heart. Two of them came from the city of Gan-ren, near the mouth of the Kwang-sin river. This important place, with the neighbouring city of Kwei-k'i and the busy market of Ho-k'eo, farther up the same fine stream, were influenced for CHRIST by his efforts ; and in all three there are prosperous and growing churches to-day. Later on, the care of the young converts and of a school for boys in Kiu-kiang, prevented Mr. Cardwell from devoting so much time to itineration, important though he felt it to be.

And here, for the present, we must leave the unfolding story of KIANG-SI, thankful for this "day of small things," from which so much, in the not-distant future, was to grow.

CHAPTER VIII.

FACTS ABOUT FUNDS.

THUS, then, we reach the close of the year 1874, and near the termination of a period characterised by extension and change, both in the Home and China departments of the Mission. But before referring to the steps of its final and most important advance, we cannot but notice to the glory of GOD some very marked providences in connection with the way in which its needs were daily met by Him upon whose faithfulness alone His servants were satisfied to rely. Writing from Shanghai during the summer of this year, Mr. Hudson Taylor enters into a measure of detail upon this subject, mentioning to one much interested in the work some of the trials of faith, by which the LORD had strengthened the hearts of His servants and proved His presence with them. We subjoin the letter in full :—

"In *The Christian* sheet almanac for this year, the text, 'Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you,' is printed in large type. Upon receiving it I felt that it was a message from GOD to my soul, and I have carried the almanac about with

me in all my journeys, putting it up here and there as I have sojourned for a longer or shorter time, to keep the text before my eyes. Often has it proved a word in season. May it be such to you; for there are few of us, I expect, who have not some cares, and we are too prone to fail in casting them *all* on Him who cares for us.

"You would be much interested could I tell you how, during the past six months, the LORD has shown His care in the matter of Mission funds. But this would take too long. I have, however, just made up and sent home a copy of the accounts for last quarter; and with them before me, while the incidents are still fresh in my memory, I will give you some details of the pecuniary history of this briefer period. You will see that it *would* have been one of constant and wearing anxiety, but for the privilege, the precious resource of casting the daily and hourly burdens upon the LORD. As it is, His love has made it a time of much peace.

"You may scarcely realise that our work is now so extensive that it cannot be carried on, without much difficulty and trial, at a cost of less than one hundred pounds a week. This may seem a large sum, but ours is a large work. We have more than fifty buildings—houses, chapels, and schools—to keep in repair, and for the majority of these we have also to pay rent. More than a hundred labourers are supported, including native helpers. If to these be added the children of the missionaries, the native boys and

girls in the boarding schools, and students, there are seventy more mouths to fill daily, seventy more persons to clothe. I need scarcely say that the travelling expenses involved in the work in China, now extended to five provinces, are not small; in addition to those incurred by the return of invalided missionaries to England. To meet these demands with one hundred pounds a week requires the utmost care and frugality. My own expenses for all purposes at home and here are independent of Mission resources.

"During the months January to March I received from the Hon. Secretaries of the Mission only £442 1*s*. They were distressed at being able to send so little, and committed the matter in earnest prayer to GOD, as we did here. Besides this, remittances were sent, through me, to various members of the Mission in China direct, to the value of £260. These sums, not being in any sense donations to the Mission, cannot be entered in our general account, though they so largely help in the work. Still, including even these, the total receipts were far less than the outlay, so that the balances of the previous quarter being exhausted, there were no funds at most of our stations by the end of March.

"On making up my Mission accounts on April 1st, I found that I had 25 dollars, 29 cents (about £5 10*s*.) in hand; and I knew that most, if not all, the members of the Mission, must be urgently needing funds for their own daily requirements,

as well as for the expenses of the work. I constantly cast these cares on GOD, and hoped that when I reached Shanghai I should find His answer

FRENCH SETTLEMENT, SHANGHAI.

in the shape of remittances; for as I was travelling my letters had to await me there. On the 7th we arrived, and received the letters of several mails. You may imagine the interest with which, after seeking the LORD'S blessing upon them, they were read. I found a remittance from the Secretaries of little over £25, consisting wholly of special donations—£7 for two of the missionaries, and the remainder made up of small sums for the support of particular native helpers. I further learned that there were no funds at home for the general purposes of the Mission. Now I knew that £500 would have been instantly

absorbed ; that one hundred and seventy mouths had daily to be fed ; that the life of Mrs. Stevenson appeared to hang on an immediate return to England ; and that there were no more mails due for nearly a fortnight. Realising all this, need I say that I required the precious resource of again casting *all* the care on Him who cares for each one of us? In so doing, the assurance that His grace was sufficent for me and for each of the needy ones, filled my heart with love and joy.

"Next morning I awoke about five o'clock, and found the burden coming back again ; but, in accordance with Phil. iv. 6, I made my requests known to GOD, and found the promise of the verse following fulfilled. Some of the passages, too, which occurred in the course of my morning's reading seemed to have been written on purpose for me. When my dear wife awoke I told her of the assurance I felt that help was at hand, though I had not the least idea of how the LORD would send it. And so it proved. Before noon a letter reached me, which, having been addressed to Ningpo instead of Shanghai, arrived some days later than the letters of the same mail which had come direct. It contained cheques for me to forward inland to many of the members of the Mission, to the value of £260, besides several other sums. These kind gifts greatly cheered me, and relieved me of anxiety concerning the personal wants of those to whom they were sent, though they still left an urgent need, about

which we continued to wait upon GOD. I asked the prayers of some of the members of the Mission with special reference to Mr. Stevenson and his family; and in the full conviction that the LORD would supply the need, their outfits for the voyage were proceeded with.

"On the 13th of April one of our missionaries put into my hand one hundred dollars as a first contribution towards the Stevensons' expenses home, with the words :—

> "'At some time or other the LORD will provide.
> It may not be my time,
> It may not be thy time,
> But yet in His own time
> The LORD will provide.'

"On April 22nd I received from the Honorary Secretaries a remittance of over £100, but, like the previous one, it was all special donations, and left more than nine-tenths of the needy objects untouched. At first I felt rather disappointed, till I reflected that GOD had ordered the *form* in which it came, as well as the fact of its coming; and that consequently it must be both right and best. And so indeed it proved in more ways than one, ere many days had passed, reminding me of the words :—

> "'Judge not the LORD by feeble sense,
> But trust Him for His grace,'

and shaming my temporary disappointment. Part of this money was used to refund to one of the

members of the Mission 190 dollars which he had advanced before. Adding 10 dollars to it, he now gave me the 200 towards the Stevensons' home-going, together with £15 more. Later, another member gave 50 dollars; three gave 10 dollars each; another 220 dollars; completing, within half a tael, the sum required for the passages to Marseilles, and this deficiency was soon made up by one of the previous donors. For travelling expenses in China, and through France, our brother was supplied by other kind friends; so that all was ready one mail before he was able to complete his preparations and reach Shanghai. Thus once more our confident expectations were not put to shame.

"At the risk of some repetition, I may quote from a letter written to one of the members of the Council about this time:—

"'After proving GOD'S faithfulness for many years, I can testify that times of want have ever been times of special blessing, or have led to them. Never has the work entailed more real trial, or so much exercise of faith, as recently. The sickness of our beloved sister, Miss Blatchley, the needs of my dear children, the state of our Mission funds, the changes required to allow of some going home, of others coming out, and of the further extension of the work, and many other things not easily expressed in writing, would be crushing anxieties if *we* were to bear them. But the LORD bears us, and them too; and makes our hearts so very glad in Himself alone—not in Himself

plus a bank balance—that I have never known greater freedom from anxiety and care.

"'The other week, when I reached Shanghai, we were in great and immediate need. The English and French mails were both in, and had brought no remittance of general funds, and there were none at home to remit. I cast the burden on the LORD. Next morning, when awaking, I felt a little inclined to trouble; but He gave me the word—"I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them"; and, "Certainly I will be with thee"; and before 6 A.M. I was as sure that help was at hand as when, at noon, I received a letter containing more than £300. Now our need is again great and urgent; but God is greater and more near; and because He *is*, and is *what* He is, all will be, must be well. Oh! the joy of knowing the *living* GOD, of seeing the *living* GOD, of resting on the *living* GOD! I am but His agent: He will look after His own honour, provide for His own servants, and supply all our need according to His own riches; you helping by your prayers, and by your 'work of faith and labour of love.'

"But to return. We were kept waiting on GOD till May 5th. When a remittance of £104 odd was received from the Secretaries, of which £100 was for the general purposes of the Mission, none but those who know what it is to bear the burdens of others can tell the joy with which we distributed this small sum, small as compared with the wants of more than forty stations. A kind friend augmented it by a

gift of 6 dollars on the same day, and 26 dollars were also forwarded to me, which had been given to support a girl in the boarding-school. On the 15th, 222 dollars reverted to the funds, which had been temporarily appropriated in February to an object for which it was no longer required; and Mr. Judd, on leaving Nan-king for Wu-ch'ang, was able to hand in over 240 dollars, a surplus of funds given him in December, and which had not been needed. In these ways, and by the sale of some stationery and profits on exchange, the most urgent necessities of May were met, leaving us all the promises of GOD to meet the expenses of June, and nothing else besides.

"I asked urgent prayer of some of the brethren for £500 to cover the manifest and unavoidable outlay of that month. Perhaps never in the history of the Mission have we *all* been so low together. As it proved, the outlay of the month required above £100 more than the sum I had named; and therefore the LORD, who knows all our necessities better even than we do, supplied this too.

"From the Hon. Secretaries at home I received during the month a sum of over £500; and in China, in ways which I cannot now detail, 290 dollars, 75 cents, besides. On making up the accounts to this date, I found that we had gained by exchange during the half year, including interest for a small fund given for building purposes, 200 dollars, 32 cents. The aggregate of these amounts came to about £100,

which was all additional to the money remitted from home; so that not only were the current expenses of the month met, but Mrs. Cardwell and her children were able to return to England, a change which increasing prostration showed to be necessary, leaving me with a balance of 16*s.* on July 1st.

"You will wonder how my dear fellow-labourers bore the trial connected with their respective stations and their own personal needs during this time; and to show you how lovingly I am encouraged, and how these burdens are borne up before the LORD, I will give you some extracts from the letters of a few.

"One writing on June 22nd says:—

"'Yours of the 13th inst. came to hand two or three days ago, but the money did not arrive till this morning. Many, many thanks for it; for, like the rest of the brethren, we have been hard put to it of late. Had it not been for the £15 that —— gave us, I do not know what we should have done; and even with that we found it difficult to make both ends meet. But, praise GOD, He has not allowed us to want. The money came most opportunely, both for our own use and for the work of the Church. We do pray for you—not talk to GOD about you, but *pray*; and He knows it. When you said, "Pray for £500 for this month's expenses," the sum seemed so insignificant when we referred it to GOD, that I felt ashamed that we should think of it as a difficulty at all. GOD's inexhaustible riches rose up before my mind so vividly, that £500 seemed no more to me than five hundred stones in the street. I have not the slightest doubt that He will give you this, and much more, as soon as His time comes. What I have to watch against is impatience at waiting His time.

"'Some little while ago I had a doctor's bill of 50 dollars sent me. At the time I had only 8 dollars of my own in the world. However, I told the LORD all about it, and felt assured that He would provide, but I did not anticipate the way in which it would be done. Some unknown friend paid the bill! Who it can be I have not the slightest idea. The LORD knows; and I pray that He may reward and bless the one who has been so kind to us. Is not GOD faithful?'

"From another station I received the following, dated June 16th:—

"'Many thanks for your kind letter and the money, which I received safely this afternoon. My last cash (the twentieth part of a penny) was spent yesterday morning, and I was waiting on our Heavenly Father to-day for money to pay my teacher. Praise His holy Name, He still answers our prayers! How blessed it is to trust Him, and how restful the certainty that "all things work together for good to them that love GOD."'

"Another, writing a week later, says:—

"'The money order for —— arrived here to-day, and I believe it can be cashed to-morrow at the native banker's. . . . For the first time I was unable to send for the usual quantity of rice for my school children; but neither they nor we have lacked one single meal. Our wants have all been supplied. I cannot help feeling glad that GOD has sent us this little trial; our common need has drawn us nearer to each other, and at the same time nearer to CHRIST. Very earnest have been the prayers offered up for you, that the LORD would fulfil all your petitions, and grant you according to your own heart. We are a happy household, sympathising in one another's joys and sorrows; conscious,

too, with a glad consciousness, that CHRIST is King in home and heart.'

"A fifth correspondent tells me that when the money I sent him on June 12th arrived, they had not a dollar left, and were praying for relief. 'How gracious of the LORD,' he adds, 'to hear our united cry.'

"I might give you more quotations, but these suffice. . . . 'Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.'"

Such, then, were some of the difficulties that were permitted at this time to test with the pressure of an ever-growing need the distinctive principles upon which the Inland Mission had been founded—principles whose failure had been so confidently predicted by many from the beginning. These trials, however, with their corresponding vindication of the LORD'S unfailing care, served only to strengthen the faith that He had given, and more than ever to confirm the confidence of His servants in the one great underlying truth upon which those principles are based—the truth that, at all times, and under all circumstances, "GOD, alone, is sufficient for GOD'S own work."

CHAPTER IX.

THE LOWEST EBB, AND THE TURN OF THE TIDE, 1874-1875.

PECUNIARY difficulties, however, were by no means the most severe part of the discipline through which at this time the LORD was preparing the Inland Mission for coming extension and blessing. 1874 to 1875 was a time of profound trial both in China and at home. The health of several of the Mission staff broke down; the Hu-chau riot seriously endangered the lives of two of the workers; and, saddest of all for the Mission as a whole—Emily Blatchley died.

It is almost impossible in these days of careful organisation and division of labour in every department to realise how much the last loss meant. Twenty years ago the China Inland Mission had no English head-quarters' staff, no office, no clerks, no editorial or travelling secretaries, no workers set apart to represent China's needs at home. The Council assembled regularly and did everything in its power to meet the growing claims upon it, but its members —men of business, for the most part—were largely

and necessarily absorbed in other affairs, and unable to devote themselves exclusively to the service of the C. I. M. During the first six years of the Mission Mr. and Mrs. Berger had been solely responsible for its direction at home.* Upon the formation of the Council, in 1871, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor being then in England, their little North London residence—No. 6, Pyrland Road, Mildmay—naturally became the centre of the work. And when, in October 1872, they returned to China, leaving the house and children under the care of Miss Blatchley, no change was made in this arrangement. The anchor of the Mission once cast had found a long holding.

Emily Blatchley's experience in China as a member of the *Lammermuir* party, and one of the little group that had passed through the Yang-chau riot, rendered her specially fit for the onerous charge that devolved upon her when she thus unofficially assumed the duties of Home Secretary. Though far from strong, she was a noble worker. Exceptionally gifted, and spiritual, she had passed through deep experimental training in the school of faith.† And such an one was needed to fill the post. For more than a year, single-handed in this department of the Mission, that young, devoted woman "held the ropes."

Most heartily and gratefully must all friends of the

* See vol. i., pp. 264, 450-456.

† See vol. i., pp. 275-281, 304, 314, 320, 337, etc.

Mission recognise and appreciate the helpfulness of the Council at this time and ever since. Never did any Mission possess more painstaking, competent advisers than the C. I. M. But, as all know well who are connected with the carrying on of similar efforts, not upon the outer group of warmly sympathetic but comparatively irresponsible helpers, does the heaviest charge devolve, but upon the few who stand at the centre and really do the work. The Mission's life is their life. They have no other. Were they not here they would be in the field. The burden of heathendom is on their hearts—all the more deeply often that they cannot themselves go forth into its darkness. Their souls are moved with longing for those who know nothing of a Saviour's love, but they cannot share the privilege of telling them of JESUS. Less direct, though no less needed, theirs is a hidden service dear to the Master, who knows it all. Steady, burden-bearing strength must be found at the heart of things, to meet with its regular non-intermittent pulse-beat the demands of the system and extremities. Lives must be buried here, consecrated lives, hard-working, noble, silent; generously spent on details; often unrecognised; a human soul's libation poured out on petty cash and correspondence, great in the sight of GOD.

Such a life was Emily Blatchley's at this time, as she bore the charge of house and children, correspondence, office duties, and was, in a word, factotum, sitting at her Secretary's desk. Day by day she

worked on bravely and prayerfully, following with deep heart-sympathy each smallest shifting of the kaleidoscopic changes among the China mission-staff, receiving and acknowledging donations, counselling as to candidates, writing cheery letters out of her own isolation to even lonelier workers far away, wading through closely written pages of the welcome China mail, extracting and preparing their contents for the press, addressing wrappers for the issue of the *Occasional Paper* of those days, welcoming returned missionaries, entertaining strangers, taking a helpful part in her earnest, spiritual fashion at the weekly prayer-meeting at Pyrland Road, carrying on the household, mothering the bairns, and all with failing health.

In the early summer of 1874 her increasing physical weakness necessitated the return of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor to England, and with a longing heart she looked forward to reunion with the loved friends whose home-coming would mean so much of personal joy and practical relief. For the work's sake alone it was more than well that they should come just now; and her deep attachment to the leaders of the Mission made their arrival seem to the tired toiler doubly a "desired haven."

As the long summer days brought warmth and brightness to the great city, their ship was on its way to England's shores.

"They will be here in a few weeks!" she said, with a sense of rest.

But before the travellers could reach London she had reached the City of GOD.*

The frail barque of her young life had anchored beyond all stormy seas, brought by Him to its "desired haven."

MISS BLATCHLEY.

Sad indeed was the trial that awaited the returning travellers when, at their journey's end, they learned that the friend and fellow-worker they had so much desired to meet once more had passed beyond the reach of earthly love or human help. And sorrow

* Emily Blatchley died of consumption, July 25th, 1874.

was added to sorrow when a few days later Mrs. Rudland, of T'ai-chau, who, with her husband and children, had come by the same ship, was called away—the fifth member of the *Lammermuir* party to enter into rest.

Writing of the loss sustained through the death of Miss Blatchley, and of the position of the Mission at this crisis, Dr. Grattan Guinness well said :—

"The most glorious triumphs of CHRIST are spiritual, and His noblest work is that wrought in the secret of the soul. Not the conquest of kingdoms, but self-conquest; not the renunciation of anything merely external, but self-renunciation; not the consecration of substance, but self-consecration in the service of GOD and man—these are the hardest deeds to accomplish; and the most Divine attainments in the world. They shine with the peculiar light of Calvary.

"Emily Blatchley, though unknown to the world, was a true heroine, and an instance of this noble, CHRIST-like self-sacrifice for the good of others. Her memory is fragrant, for her life was consecrated to CHRIST and the salvation of the heathen. For His sake she took care of a little flock, the children of the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor, of the China Inland Mission. She tended them in health and in sickness, at home and abroad, for years; and as long as health permitted was their only teacher. This she did to help forward the evangelisation of China, by setting Mr. and Mrs. Taylor as free as possible for directly missionary work. Not content with caring for Mr. Taylor's children, she became a Secretary of the Mission. She wrote in its interest thousands of letters; she kept its accounts; she edited its *Occasional Papers*; she helped to bear its burdens; she worked long hours, and often far on into the night. She not only toiled with head and hand,

but with heart, too, for she prayed for the Mission. She daily remembered its missionaries by name at the Throne of Grace, and pleaded continually its cause with GOD. She suffered, too. She 'endured hardness' when in China, and on her journeys, putting up with much discomfort. She ministered to her fellow-missionaries, and nursed them when they were sick. She bore the trial of her faith, and that of love as well; for in the cause of Missions she sacrificed her heart's affections. And all this she did in a quiet, unpretending way, and with a calm perseverance which continued to the end of her life. None could have given more to the work of GOD among the heathen than she did, for she gave all she had—herself. Blessed be GOD for the grace bestowed upon her, and for the everlasting rest into which she has entered; for the grace which caused her to toil for JESUS, and then to sleep in Him.

"Faithful friend of a feeble but heroic Mission, would that all its helpers were like-minded with thee! Would that all those who have ministered to it of their substance had as constant a memory of its wants as thine! The China Inland Mission has no eloquent advocate of its claims. It has no denomination for its support. It has no great names on which to rely. It is, therefore, cast the more on GOD, and on the faithful love and help of the comparatively few who can appreciate the simplicity, faith, and devotedness which characterise its work in the interest of China's millions. But let those few remember that it is no small honour to be enabled to recognise and minister to the Master when He appears in the garments of weakness and poverty.

"Friends of the China Inland Mission, a precious helper has just been removed from our midst; let us close our ranks, and seek to fill the gap. That Mission now needs our help more than ever; let us prove ourselves worthy of the occasion. Let us help the work afresh, and let us

persevere in helping it. Here, around this newly opened grave, let our interest in this work revive.

"And help Thou, O LORD; is not Thy Name inscribed upon its banner? Is not its song *Ebenezer* and its hope *Jehovah-Jireh*? Bless, then, this Mission, and let the little one become a thousand, for Thy glory's sake."

A prayer and prophecy in one. For GOD had greater things in store for His servants than any yet revealed. His purposes of blessing included developments undreamed of even in the brightest anticipations of the past. But, first, there must be lessons of humility, patience, and faith, and a deepened apprehension of the utter weakness of the instrument, that the glory should be His alone, to whom only it is due.

Emily Blatchley gone, the reins of the home department had to be gathered up by other hands. Mr. Hudson Taylor's presence made things look comparatively easy. He who knew every detail was here on the spot to take charge and manage matters.

Manage matters?

Within a few weeks he himself, prostrate and suffering, knew not if he should ever work again. For six months entirely laid aside through a serious injury to the spine, the result of a fall in the spring of the year, he was confined to his room and bed, a helpless, possibly a hopeless, invalid.

Surely, then, the lowest ebb was reached. Bereaved and weakened by recent losses, with but few friends, and a restricted circle of influence, and with no voice to plead its cause, except with GOD, it almost seemed

as though the Inland Mission must be forgotten amongst the many other and more prominent claims constantly pressing on the Church. No denomination was pledged to its support ; there were no means in hand to meet the needs of the forty-three stations and out-stations, with over sixty native helpers and thirty-five missionaries, in China, and no reserve funds to fall back upon should supplies fail. Its one trained helper, skilled in the daily executive, was in her quiet grave—never to work again. Its leader, utterly broken down, was, as he said, "unable to do anything but rejoice in GOD."

Conception almost fails as we try to realise what that crisis must have meant in such a Mission. Daily work came as usual, requiring business ability for its immediate discharge, and the letters could only be brought to the bedside of the sick man who could not write a word. There was no office or clerk to dispatch correspondence or to issue the little magazine. In a word, there was nothing for the maintenance of the Mission in distant, man-forgotten China, nothing to ensure to-morrow's bread to the workers there, far less next week's supplies, except, as Paul puts it, some of the "things which are not," and—GOD.

But GOD was there.

"What a life of praise, and joy, and rest, we should all lead," wrote Mr. Taylor, "did we but *fully* believe in the wisdom and love of GOD, and gladly acquiesce in His will and way, casting every care on Him in trustful prayer.

"It has been a great delight to me during this long illness to see how the LORD has met the daily need of His

work, especially in regard to helpers. When lying ill in one room, with my dear wife also laid aside, for a time, in the next, often would ten, fifteen, twenty letters come in, requiring prompt attention. How were they to be answered? Well, the LORD knew our need, and scarcely were the letters read, oftentimes, when some friend would call, volunteering assistance.

"'Can I help you by writing an hour or two this morning?' would be the kind inquiry.

"'Yes, indeed!' we gratefully respond; 'see what a number of letters have come in.'

"If one who called thus in the morning could not stay long enough to finish all that needed to be done, another was sure to come in the afternoon, and perhaps one or two at night. Occasionally a young friend employed in a city office during the day would come round in the evening to do any needful book-keeping, or answer up letters not yet dealt with. So it continued day by day. Generally we had many letters; but if, on the contrary, only a few came in, we said to ourselves, 'Probably no one is able to help in the correspondence to-day,' which generally proved to be the case.

"One of the happiest times in my life was that period of enforced inactivity, when one could do nothing but rejoice in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him, and see Him every day meeting all our need. And never, either before or since that time, was my correspondence so well kept in hand and answered up to date." *

So day by day the help was given. But could it last on so? Could such a Mission live? There is no

* After this came a time when more regular help was afforded, first by Mr. Stevenson, and subsequently by various candidates and students preparing for the field.

hint of giving up in any word from leader or from workers, but—how could they go on? What was there to maintain them? Who was there to take charge, think, plan, exert himself, influence the torpid thousands of professing Christians who think so very lightly, if ever they think at all, of China and her needs? How, in the survival of the fittest, the struggle for existence, so palpable, so pressing, even in Christian work, could this poor unknown Mission expect not to go with the weakest, to the wall?

But, on the other hand, how could it die with such a plea for existence as lay summed up in that one great word CHINA? Two provinces, as large as England, Scotland, and Ireland, unreached before, had been opened up already by China Inland Mission pioneers.* Hundreds of converts gathered would be left unshepherded, millions as yet ungathered would be hopelessly abandoned, were its little group of workers to retire. Leave China? Why, that meant to leave millions without JESUS CHRIST. In the districts longest evangelised, and nearest the coast, the missionaries were still only as one man to a million; but inland *one hundred and fifty millions, in nine great provinces, were dying without GOD!*

"Close the unequal struggle; abandon surely so forlorn a hope!" Such would have been the verdict of prudent worldly-wisdom. But prudent worldly-wisdom would certainly never have started, and assuredly never have carried on the China Inland

* See Chapter VII.

Mission. The well-considered dictates of sober common sense weigh with peculiar lightness in one side of the scale whose other side is balanced with the promises of GOD. Those feeble men and women held in their hands a lever able to move the world—its shaft their simple faith and prayer, its fulcrum the Unseen.

Thus the year drew to a close. Prayer-meetings and consultations still had to be held upstairs in the quiet room where Mr. Taylor continued to be the LORD'S prisoner; and during the last weeks of 1874 many were the seasons of communion with GOD about the needs of the still unreached millions of Inland China and the future of the Mission whose aim was their evangelisation.

Certainly it seemed anything but a favourable opportunity for *advance*! And yet the unutterable darkness of Inland China, and especially of the nine great and populous provinces in which no Protestant missionary had ever resided, pressed as a constant burden on the heart. And before long, definite plans began to form themselves in the quiet of that sick-room, where, amidst pain and weakness, the LORD'S servant was being enabled to put into practice the precious lesson learned so long ago, and really "to move man, through GOD, by prayer alone."*

What was to be done that these nine, vast provinces, fully half as large as Europe, might have the Gospel? What part would the LORD have the

* See vol. i., p. 66.

little Inland Mission take, in spite of all apparent weakness and insufficiency, in this great work?

"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

And so, about Christmas time 1874, we find a remarkable little paper making its way into several of the leading Christian journals, containing a request for prayer—prayer that GOD would raise up during the coming year a band of eighteen men to go, two and two, into all the nine unevangelised provinces of Inland China.

Eighteen men within one year? And to enter those distant, untravelled regions, hitherto destitute of the Gospel? It seemed a bold request indeed; and especially in view of the source from whence it came. Besides, Inland China could scarcely be considered open to even the itineration of foreign travellers, much less to their residence. For although passports had been nominally obtainable ever since the Treaty of T'ien-tsin in 1858, they had practically been rarely granted, and the great mass of the people were in total ignorance of the fact that foreigners were entitled to travel beyond the open ports.

Yes, there are many difficulties and objections; and those who make the request for prayer realise, better perhaps than any others, their own exceeding weakness and lack of visible resources for such an undertaking. And yet, GOD'S time, they feel, has surely come; and He says "Go"! Can He not take up a worm, if needs be, to thresh mountains? Prayer then, and faith in GOD for the Eighteen.

"I have the fullest hope," wrote Mr. Hudson Taylor from his sick-room, "that GOD will enable us, during this New Year, 1875, to commence work in at least two or three of these unoccupied provinces; and I trust that shortly we may be able to announce the departure of missionaries for Burmah also, to undertake operations amongst the inhabitants of YÜN-NAN, to be extended, as GOD may open the way, to the adjoining districts of south-western China.

"But, it may be asked, is it really possible, in the present state of the country, for our brethren to benefit the inhabitants of these remote regions? Our risen Saviour has clearly commanded us to go forth into 'all the world.' The difficulties, it is true, can scarcely be exaggerated; but, 'the people that do know their GOD shall be strong, and do exploits.' Will not our friends join us in asking for such men—and such only—as *do* know their GOD, to go to these teeming millions?"

INLAND CHINA AND THE CHEFOO CONVENTION.

BEHOLD! THESE SHALL COME FROM FAR; AND LO! THESE FROM THE NORTH AND FROM THE WEST; AND THESE FROM THE LAND OF SINIM. ISAIAH XLIX. 12.

JEHOVAH-NISSI.

No. XXXIX.

以便以設耳

China Inland Mission Occasional Paper.

耶和華以拉

MARCH 1875.

NISBET & CO., BERNERS STREET.
S. W. PARTRIDGE,
9 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

EBENEZER

JEHOVAH-JIREH

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CHAPTER X.

INLAND CHINA CLOSED—AND YET THE EIGHTEEN GIVEN.

1875—1876.

WITH the prayer for the Eighteen, and in the confidence that they would be given, the friends of the Inland Mission bade farewell to 1874, parting at the same time from the familiar guide that had conducted them thus far through the Mission's early history—the old *Occasional Papers* of the C. I. M. Four small octavo volumes, covering the story of our first ten years, lie by me as I write. Bound in sober brown, printed in plain type, and without pictures or ornamentation—just the simplest possible statement of the progress of affairs—these little old-time papers seem in themselves an epitome of the principles and practice of the work they represent. Their only illustration, an antiquity not without interest, was the highly ornamental cover-block, reproduced opposite. Cash accounts, several faintly tinted maps, and inserted slip-lists of the stations and missionaries, offer the only other variety to what might nowadays be called small, dull type, and uninteresting looking

pages. Yet these pages were welcomed, prayed over and pondered, and did a deep, lasting work. Could any better proof be given of the earnestness and spirituality of the friends of the humble-minded pioneering Mission?

Dulness, however, is not essential to devotion, and the growing Mission passed, at this juncture, out of the limited twenty- or thirty-page leaflet style of *Occasional Papers* into a missionary monthly of the popular quarto form.

With the bright days of July 1875, the first number of this new periodical, bearing the title of *China's Millions*, made its appearance. It was destined to chronicle the wider pathway of coming years, to tell how the LORD fulfilled the expectations of His people, and in the midst of their weakness perfected His strength, multiplying their numbers, increasing their faith, and setting before them widely open doors.

The last of the *Occasional Papers* (March 1875) contained a little slip printed in red, and headed "*China viâ Burmah*," announcing that Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Henry Soltau* were about to start for Bhamô, to commence work there as a basis from which to reach YUN-NAN and western China.

One element in the guidance which had led to the appeal of Christmas 1874 for eighteen workers for the nine unevangelised provinces, had been the apparent

* Recent Hon. Sec. of the China Inland Mission. See vol. i., p. 454.

feasibility of carrying out a plan conceived ten years earlier, of entering western China by the Burmese route. Long abandoned as unworkable, this project was revived by means of an unexpected visit from a gentleman, interested in the subject. Some years before he had crossed the frontier between Burmah and YUN-NAN in company with a British expedition under Major Sladen, sent in 1868 to discover the

SKETCH MAP OF BURMAH.

possibilities of trade with western China. Scarcely had they entered YUN-NAN when the hostility of the hill tribes, combined with the disturbed state of the province, still in the throes of the prolonged Mohammedan rebellion, compelled them to retire, abandoning their intention of reaching Ta-li Fu, the capital of the insurrectionists. Since that time no attempt had been made to visit western China. The fires of the rebellion had been quenched in blood, and the victorious Chinese, under the leadership of Brigadier Li, had regained possession of YUN-NAN. The restoration of peace in that long-troubled region made an entrance for the Gospel, *viâ* the Burmese route, again seem possible.

"From what I have seen of Burmah," remarked the visitor, "I have no doubt that missionaries could settle with freedom and safety at Bhamô, within a hundred miles of the Chinese frontier."

Such testimony had weight. It forcibly recalled to Mr. Hudson Taylor the plans he had hopefully entertained long before. In 1865, the year of the founding of the China Inland Mission, Mr. Stevenson, then a young volunteer about to sail for China, had got from Mr. Taylor his first conception of this possible western gate to the great Empire. The subject had been mooted at a Bristol gathering, where Mr. Hudson Taylor had indicated on a pocket map of China the dotted line of the accompanying sketch, showing how direct an entrance to YUN-NAN the Burmese route would give. Young Stevenson had

noted the remark, which often recurred to him. And now at home on furlough, ripened by ten years' missionary experience, the subject came up a second time, in the form of a practical question—

"Will you undertake settled work at Bhamô, with a view to reaching western China?"

To which he gladly answered, "If GOD will, certainly."

Thus, early in the new year, Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Soltau, who had subsequently joined him, were busy with their preparations; while special prayer was being made for the other sixteen men asked of GOD for the remaining eight unoccupied provinces.

In the meantime, all unknown to those who, on their knees, were seeking blessing upon these regions, GOD Himself was so over-ruling the affairs of nations as to open before His people a wide door of access to China's remotest children. At first it looked, however, as if the way were closed more firmly than it previously had been. For just at this juncture complications occurred which threatened to involve war between England and China.

Upon the restoration of peace in YUN-NAN, in 1873, the inhabitants of that province, which had suffered so long and so fearfully from the horrors of civil war, began to regain a measure of hope and courage. Trade with Burmah, at one time in a flourishing condition, commenced to revive. To gauge its extent and character the British appointed an agent to reside at Bhamô; and organised an expedition, in whose

equipment no expense was spared, to cross from Burmah to Hankow—"thoroughly to examine the capabilities of the country beyond the frontier." The object of these measures is not far to seek. "When the impoverished condition of south-western China is remembered," writes the author of *The Middle Kingdom*, "the question arises, Why should the Indian Government strive to open a trade where industry and population have been so destroyed? But the expectation that thereby a greater market would be found for its opium throughout western China is a sufficient reason, perhaps, for undertaking so costly an experiment." In any case the effort was made, and one of the consular staff, Augustus R. Margary, a young man of ability and promise, was sent from Hankow to Bhamô to act as interpreter and guide to the expedition.

The long and difficult journey across China was accomplished in safety, and Mr. Margary arrived at Bhamô in January 1875, having been courteously treated by Chinese officials all along the route. In spite of these friendly relations, however, Mr. Margary intimated that he thought there were intrigues going on contrary to the interests of the expedition; and it was not without a measure of apprehension that the large party set forward on the return journey, early in February. Difficulties beset their progress. Scarcely had they reached the frontier when very determined opposition began to manifest itself. Mr. Margary pressed on to Man-wyne, to make arrange-

ments with Brigadier Li for the reception of the travellers; and there, as is well known, he was treacherously murdered by order of the Chinese officials. Unable to proceed in the face of such disaster, the expedition returned to Bhamô, and the attempt to open trade with western China was abandoned. Through this tragic failure, however, a higher end was ultimately to be attained.

The murder of Mr. Margary aroused very widespread indignation, and Sir Thomas Wade, at Pekin, was directed to demand a thorough investigation of the whole affair. Eighteen months of tedious deliberation followed, during which many matters affecting the intercourse of England and China came under consideration. Meanwhile, at home, the relatives of the murdered traveller were praying, amid their grief, that his death might be the means of opening up those regions to the Gospel, a prayer most marvellously answered in the providence of GOD.*

At first, as we have said, it seemed as if inland China were more inaccessible than ever. At the very time when at home in England, Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau were preparing to start for Bhamô, during the very month in which their purpose was announced to the friends of the Mission, Margary was murdered on the borderland, and the western gate of China swung to.

Yet prayer for the Eighteen was daily going up

* See Chapter XII., The Chefoo Convention.

to GOD, and with the answer needs must come access to the walled Empire. Silently the Supreme Worker was so ordering political events far away, as to bring about in His own time the opening of China to the Gospel. Silently, near at hand, He was fitting and calling forth His chosen labourers; removing hindrances one by one; inspiring prayer, strengthening faith, and providing necessary means, so that in due season the men He had prepared might go in and possess the given land.

China was laid on many hearts in England. The men asked of GOD began to come. A class for the study of the language gathered round the couch where Mr. Hudson Taylor still lay, helpless and suffering. No. 6, Pyrland Road, was full and busy, for a change had come with the New Year, and the prayer for the Eighteen seemed to bring fresh life into the Mission. The cases of over thirty candidates were under consideration, several of whom were accepted for the next out-going parties.

"Not long ago," wrote Mr. Taylor, "it became necessary to resign one of our helpers to go to China without delay. I remarked to some friends,—

'Perhaps the LORD will lessen the amount of correspondence for a time, unless He should provide unexpected assistance as before.'

"We found that the correspondence lessened. Our brother King sailed on the 15th of May. The correspondence continued small for several weeks after he had to commence his preparations, and we were able to compass it. On the morning of the 24th, however, when

we met for our usual hour of prayer on behalf of China, I remarked,—

"'The Lord has lessened our correspondence, it is true; but this has also involved lessened contributions. We must ask Him to remind some of His more wealthy stewards of the present needs of the work.'

"Upon adding up the amount received during the three weeks between the 4th and 24th of May, I found that it came to little over £68; and could not but add, 'this is nearly £235 less than our average expenditure in China for the same period. Let us remind the LORD of it.' And we did so. That very evening the postman brought a letter which, upon opening, we found to contain a cheque for £235 7*s.* 9*d.*, to be entered as 'from the sale of plate.' Thus the LORD made up the sum required, and even more; for next morning the first half of a five-pound note was also received from another donor. . . .

"Trust in the LORD at all times. You will never have cause to regret it."

In the smallest details, as well as in larger matters, the workers felt that they had help unseen. A party was preparing to start for China, and Mr. Taylor could not, on account of weakness, go as usual, to make the needful arrangements for their passage, at moderate rates. One afternoon, however, a Christian mate of a vessel bound for China, called and remarked before leaving—

"By-the-by, I wish there were some missionaries you could send out with us just now! I should be delighted to make all the arrangements, if you would trust me."

So the passage of that party was settled.

Thus need after need was met. And when, in the autumn of 1875, Mr. McCarthy returned to China taking with him two new brethren, no fewer than sixteen of the eighteen prayed for had already been given. The rest very quickly followed.

"Had I been well, and able to move about," wrote Mr. Taylor, "some might have thought that my urgent appeals for help, rather than GOD'S answer to our united prayer, had sent the eighteen men to China. But, utterly laid aside, and only able to dictate a brief request for prayer, the answer, direct from GOD, was the more marked.

The names of the brethren who joined the Mission at this period were—

1.	Mr. Henry Soltau	sailed	April 6th,	1875.
2.	„ George King	„	May 15th,	„
3.	„ James Cameron	„	Aug. 4th,	„
4.	„ George Nicoll	„	Aug. „	„
5.	„ G. W. Clarke	„	„ „	„
6.	„ J. F. Broumton	„	Oct. 21st,	„
7.	„ G. F. Easton	„	„ „	„
8.	„ J. J. Turner	„	Nov.	„
9.	„ Charles Budd	„	„	„
10.	„ S. Adams (joined the Mission, in Burmah)		„	„
11.	„ F. James	sailed	Jan.	1876.
12.	„ Edward Pearse	„	„	„
13	„ George Parker	„	April	„
14.	„ H. Randle	„	„	„
15.	„ R. J. Landale	„	May	„

To which must be added six others, from amongst

those previously connected with the Mission—Messrs. Stevenson, McCarthy, Judd, Baller, Henry Taylor, and Dr. Harvey, all of whom gave themselves to the special work of seeking to enter with the Gospel the great Interior.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GATES OF THE WEST, AND THE WORKERS WHO MIGHT NOT ENTER.

1875—1876.

THE missionary enterprise undertaken by Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau when they left England for Bhamô, early in 1875, was one of no little difficulty and hazard. Upper Burmah was still an independent kingdom under despotic rule. Her relations to the Indian Government were far from friendly ; and when the missionaries landed at Rangoon, on May 14th, they found that the British resident had been withdrawn from Bhamô, and that it was no longer considered safe for Europeans to enter that region. The chief Commissioner refused to sanction their proceeding to Upper Burmah, and for several months they were detained at the coast, unable to leave British territory.

Plenty of work awaited them, however, in the English settlements at Rangoon and Maulmain ; and Mr. Stevenson found a number of Chinese refugees from the province of YUN-NAN, with whom he could freely communicate in the Mandarin dialect. These

men had been implicated in the Mohammedan rebellion, and when the Chinese Imperialists reconquered YUN-NAN, in 1873, they sought refuge under the British flag. With the help of one of them as a teacher, Mr. Stevenson commenced the study of the dialect spoken in YUN-NAN, in addition to his labour in acquiring the Burmese language. Mr. Soltau meanwhile was equally busy with evangelistic efforts for the English-speaking residents, and in full correspondence with home. It was a time of waiting. But when was waiting upon GOD ever known to be in vain?

Before September closed, the way had opened sufficiently to permit of their going on to Mandalay, where they hoped to obtain an interview with the King of Upper Burmah, and get permission to settle in Bhamô. The Rev. Mr. Rose, of the A. B. M. U., an able and experienced missionary, joined them, and twelve days' steady steaming up the magnificent Irrawaddy brought the party to Mandalay, the then capital of Upper Burmah. Close to the city, in the early morning sunlight, they passed the ruins of a scene for ever memorable in the annals of missionary heroism.

"On a plain, bordering the river," wrote Mr. Soltau, "scattered among rich palms and other beautiful foliage, lie the remains of the ancient capital of Upper Burmah, the famous city of Ava. Here the devoted Judson endured so long the cruelties inflicted by the King and his minister; and here his noble wife shone as an example of womanly energy, patience, devotion, and deep Christian tenderness."

A petition, duly setting forth in Burmese the missionaries' object and desires, was soon in the hands of the native Minister of Foreign Affairs, for presentation to the King. Audience was granted without delay; and with much prayer they repaired to the royal residence, committing the success of their enterprise to Him whose gracious care had prospered them thus far.

"A messenger was sent up to the King," wrote Mr. Soltau, "informing him of our arrival, and after a long time returned, saying that His Majesty desired our presence. We rose . . . and were conducted to the Council Chamber, a lofty wooden room, whose roof, supported on teak pillars, was painted red and gold. No carpets nor mats were spread on the wooden floor; indeed, the room presented the barest appearance. The Secretary led the way, followed by Mr. Rose, Mr. Stevenson, M. D'Avéra, and myself; behind us walked clerks and subordinates.

"A raised platform, covered by a handsome Brussels carpet, extended nearly the whole length of one side of the room. In the centre was a crimson velvet rug, highly worked with gold and silver thread, a crimson cushion, and a pair of silver-mounted binoculars. We had of course left our shoes at the foot of the palace stairs. We crouched upon the floor some distance from the platform. Near us were a dozen or more men, their *Dahs* laid in gilded sheaths on the floor.

"At one side of the platform was an open door, through which I presently descried on the staircase the top of the white umbrella which the King alone is allowed to have carried over him. He entered the room by a massively carved and gilded door, opening on to the centre of the platform, and lay down on the velvet rug, resting his arms

on the crimson cushion. His attendants, among whom I noticed a soldier with a rifle and fixed bayonet, came in by the side door, and prostrated themselves. All the ministers and attendants in like manner bowed to the ground, remaining in this position the whole time they were in the royal presence.

"Two good-looking boys, probably his sons, immediately followed the King. They carried a golden betel box and spittoon, which they placed by the King's side, themselves crouching behind him. One of them was dressed in a handsome green velvet tunic, with a diamond necklace and brilliant vest. The King, himself, wore a grandly worked under-garment, a white jacket, and a white band of muslin round his head. He has a refined face, with an intelligent expression, and often smiles; while talking he trifled with a little rosary he held in his hands. He wore a moustache, and his hair, which is considerably sprinkled with grey, was fastened in a knot at the top of his head.

"We could not have been more than eighteen or twenty feet from him, but he took up his binoculars and leisurely surveyed us for some time.

"'Where is the American?' he asked, breaking the silence.

"Mr. Rose was introduced, and bowed, as indeed we all had done when he first entered. After asking Mr. Rose a few questions he turned to us.

"'How long,' he inquired, 'are you going to stay in Mandalay?

"'Till Thursday, your Majesty.'

"'Your stay being so short, I shall be unable to say many things I desired,' remarked the King. 'I regret that you are not to remain in Mandalay under my immediate protection.'

"He made us each promise that we would write to our different countries, and ask that a teacher might be sent to

live in Mandalay, undertaking himself to support him, and give him house and schools.

"'There are many people in the golden city,' he urged. 'I will see you properly cared for, and your benefit will be great. Up there in Bhamô, among those wild people, it is unsafe. They are not to be trusted. I will not prevent your going; but if things are unfavourable, come back, and I will receive you.'

"'Will you graciously grant us some land at Bhamô?'

"'Yes, the minister shall arrange all that for you.'

"To our great surprise three handsome little silver betel boxes, and three Burmese bags, containing one hundred rupees each, were brought on wooden trays, and laid before us.

"We thanked the King for these presents, saying how unlooked for was this kindness.

"He appeared pleased at our surprise and gratification.

"'When you go among those wild people act with caution and prudence,' he said, rising to leave. . . .

"Followed by his little boys and attendants, and walking under the shadow of the white umbrella, His Majesty left the Council Chamber. The prostrate courtiers rose and prepared to leave. Even the official who interpreted for us did not look up at the King, nor move from his prone posture while royalty remained."

Next day an official letter was duly handed to the missionaries, containing instructions addressed to the Governor of Bhamô, to the effect that they had the King's permission to select any site they might desire in that city. Armed with this document, Messrs. Stevenson, Soltau, and Rose started on the 300 miles' up-river journey that lay between them and the Chinese frontier, their hearts full of praise

and gratitude to GOD for His answer to so many prayers.

Not until some time after they reached Bhamô (October 3rd, 1875) did they realise how much their successful visit to the King had meant. Orders arrived at Rangoon from the Indian Government, immediately after they had left that city, to the effect that missionaries were not on any account to be allowed to enter Upper Burmah. Had they started a few days later this dispatch would have effectually barred their way; but being already beyond British territory it could not hinder them. These orders were at once sent on to Mandalay; but there again they arrived too late, our workers having already seen the King, obtained his cordial permission to reside in Bhamô, and left the capital for that city. A few days after they reached their destination the dispatch followed them there also; but they being already peaceably settled, it only served to deepen their grateful sense of the guiding care of GOD.

All was not smooth sailing, however, even when they were settled in Bhamô, for the native Governor, although professedly in sympathy with the King's commands, practically did all he could to hinder the work. He gave the missionaries liberty to select a building site, and they soon found a suitable piece of land; but when formal application for the same was made, he raised all kinds of objections, evidently intending, as far as possible, to thwart their plans. After months of weary waiting they had to be

content with an inferior allotment, sadly out of the way of the people; but much prayer was made, both in Burmah and at home, that the Governor's heart might be changed, or that the LORD would prevent him from hindering the work. Shortly after, strange to say, he was suddenly removed. His successor was most friendly, granting the missionaries the piece of ground they had at first desired.

Medical Mission work and daily Gospel services were soon in progress. How much they were needed, the long summer days that followed sadly evinced. Fever raged, smallpox, measles, and other diseases carrying off hundreds of the people. Many painful and tragic scenes were witnessed near the roadside *zayat* or shed, which was all the accommodation our brethren were able at first to obtain. Large crowds came constantly to see them, including Chinese traders from the province of YUN-NAN, and Shans and Kahchens from the mountains. Of one day's experiences in the Chinese quarter of the city Mr. Soltau wrote:—

"In one house at the head of a narrow lane, we come upon four men all sick, and a fifth, who had been caring for them, also very ill himself. In the next house the wife is almost blind from virulent ophthalmia; while beyond again is a poor woman, with a little baby a few months old, rapidly sinking from exhaustion. Farther down, on the other side of the way, there is a long bamboo shed divided into six compartments, like a very poor fowl-house at home. We enter, and find a man moaning with pain, but unable to speak. A fortnight ago he was well and

strong; he came here on account of his uncle, who is also dying. Close by in another hut . . . within ten feet of him, lies the corpse of a man who died last night in the temple. In a shed across the way lies the uncle, above mentioned, his eyes fast glazing in death.

"'I cannot live,' he says; 'I have no desire to live, the pain is so great.'

"Mr. Stevenson tells him in simple language about the Saviour JESUS, and the great love of GOD. . . . I understand part of what is said, and lift my heart for him in silent prayer.

"Leaving this wretched scene, we hasten back to the *zayat*. A dozen people are already waiting for medicines, and more come in. Having attended to their needs we go on to the river, to care for some sick Burmese there.

"The place is like a battlefield; dead and dying are all around us. Poor creatures! In their lives they have never heard of JESUS, and in death they pass away with none to comfort them, or tell them of His love. Oh, the delusion and lies of the devil that lead men at home to suppose that if the heathen live up to the best they know, they will at last, in some way, enter 'through the gates into the city'! The heathen themselves, alas! know differently. There is no hope in the death of these people; no smile upon their faces; no earnest of heaven. One only needs to see them die in order to realise what it is to be as 'the heathen that know not GOD.' Swiftly and surely their little barque of life glides forth into the blackness and impenetrable gloom of an unknown eternity. It is awful! They say nothing; there is no bravado and cursing, such as one has known at home; silently the poor fellows pass away, into darkness."

The fame of the foreign strangers' skill and kindness in relieving sickness, and of their wonderful

medicines, quickly spread abroad. Patients from far and wide sought the dispensary ; so that the arrival of Dr. and Mrs. Harvey, and Mr. Adams, early in 1876, and the commencement of regular medical work, was very welcome. A good impression was created all around by this branch of the Mission ; and far away in YUN-NAN, beyond the Chinese frontier, travellers used to hear the Gospel spoken of in appreciative connection with the doctor's wonderful deeds.

By degrees the friendly feeling grew, and even the wild hill-men began to forget their fears. From the first Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau felt a special interest in these semi-civilised sons of the mountains ; and knowing that their homes, among the remote and lofty valleys that stretch between Bhamô and China's distant plains, would have to be passed in peace ere access could be gained to the regions beyond, they were glad of every opportunity of cultivating happy relations with the formidable strangers. But it was some time ere the shyness of the mountain-men could be removed.

"They used to walk past the *zayat* very timidly," wrote Mr. Stevenson, "just looking in. They could not muster sufficient confidence to enter ; but we made special efforts to show them kindness, and by-and-by they came, bringing their friends to introduce to us. Personally, perhaps, they are scarcely an attractive people, with their long knives, and spears, and habitually unclean ways ; but they were without the Gospel of CHRIST, and our hearts yearned after them."

More than a year elapsed before an opportunity

came to visit these Kah-chens in their mountain villages; but in November 1876, one of the chiefs sent down a letter pressing the missionaries to come and do what they could for a sick relative, about whom he was much distressed. He sent a pony and some servants as escort, mentioning gratefully his remembrance of their kindness when he was in Bhamô. It seemed a providential opening; the missionaries' hearts were full of hope. Could it be that now, at last, they were to scale the lofty heights between them and the populous provinces of western China; to look over the valleys and plains of unreached YUNNAN; to see the caravan route across the boundary; perhaps even to descend into the country from which their Chinese visitors came, reaching the unevangelised millions long prayed for with such earnest desire All seemed promising; but just as they were preparing to start, the political agent, at Bhamô, of the Viceroy of India, sent a despatch to say that he had strict orders from the Government not to let the missionaries leave the city.

"The circumstances are peculiar, however," he wrote; "you are specially invited, and are going to take medicines and visit a sick person. If, therefore, you will give me a written document, signed, guaranteeing that you will not cross over into China, I will allow you to go."

"Thus the Indian Government have bound us," wrote Mr. Stevenson; "for we could have gone in without any difficulty. But though *we* have been thus hindered, the

Word of the LORD is not bound; and, thank GOD, an entrance to YUN-NAN has been gained for the Truth by means of the printed page. Chinamen from the West come over to Bhamô in crowds, and they have freely taken back the Scriptures with them. . . . Were it not for the restriction put upon us by our own Government, my firm conviction is that it would be as easy for us to go from Bhamô into China, as it is to pass from one county to another in England."

The western gates of China seemed fast shut. But the mountain men's homes were open, and these the missionaries gladly sought. It was a wonderful journey up among the scattered villages, in the lofty heights of that strange borderland. Great kindness was shown the visitors as they went from place to place, caring for the sick and preaching the Gospel; and very interesting were the glimpses they got of the simple, hardy life of the people.

"We carried no weapons," wrote Mr. Stevenson, "though they were all armed with knives and spears. . . . We slept on the floor, in native fashion, and they shared their simple fare with us day by day. After six weeks spent thus amongst them, they begged us to remain for good, and to establish schools, and be their teachers; saying that they would build us houses, and do all that was necessary to help."

But though they would greatly have liked to stay and labour among these hospitable and hardy mountaineers, they had to bid them farewell, and descend again to the plains. Other workers, of

missions restricted to Burmah, were on their way to occupy this sphere. And China, not the Kah-chen hill country, claimed their lives.

How well known to the missionary is this experience! So many open doors unentered; so many pressing needs unmet! And then the sense of constant limitation—one little human life, so brief, so weak, unable to accomplish even a thousandth part of all it has desired! What soul-distress were here were it not for the rest of following in the steps of One who at the close of His life-service could say—"I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do."

One memorable day, towards the end of their visit, Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau climbed a lofty eminence overlooking the extensive and beautiful plain of Long-ch'uan, in their own vast parish CHINA.

"Had the day been fine," wrote the latter, "we should have had clear views of the Irrawaddy river, and the country surrounding Bhamô; but all the hills beneath us were veiled in mist. A glorious scene presented itself on the other side of the summit. Beneath us was a range of lower hills, parallel with the chain on which we stood, the Kah-chen villages nestling here and there amongst them. Beyond this frontier line the noble plain of Long-ch'uan lay outspread, studded with trees, and well watered by a river whose winding course made numerous islands appear in the broad valley. Beyond rose the rugged peaks of the lofty mountains of YUN-NAN.

"Here we were, close upon China. A descent of two or three hours would have brought us into Chinese territory. The Kah-chens could easily have acted as guides; and the

Chinese, to begin with, at any rate, would not have opposed us. . . .

"We seemed to hear two voices from that spot—the Chinese in the distance, as it were, calling us to give them the Gospel for which they have waited so long; while at our side the very presence of the mountain-men was eloquent with their plea, 'We are your friends; we ask not for your money. Come only, stay with us, and teach us the good news that you possess!'"

Sadly the missionaries had to turn away, bound by the veto of the Indian Government not to enter the land of their longings. Years afterwards the attempt thus hindered was successfully carried into effect. But for to-day, at any rate, the gates of the West were shut, and the travellers' only cheer was to find, on returning to Bhamô, that during their absence Mr. and Mrs. Cushing, of the A.B.M.U., had arrived to start among the Kah-chens, Shans, and Burmans the American Mission, which has since been so signally blessed of GOD.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHEFOO CONVENTION.

1876

HALF a continent away from the Burman frontier and the lonely outpost among the mountains where Margary had fallen a victim to Chinese treachery, negotiations consequent upon his death dragged their weary length through official circles at Pekin for fully eighteen months, with no satisfactory conclusion. The members of the Tsung-li Ya-mun seemed unable to come to terms with Sir Thomas Wade, and in 1876 prospects of war became increasingly serious.

Meanwhile the eighteen workers for inland China were already on the field and busy studying the language. But, far from a wider opening being secured into the unreached provinces, it seemed for a time, as though missionaries might have to retire from the Interior altogether. Much prayer was made, however, on both sides of the sea, that the prolonged negotiations might result in greater freedom of access being peacefully obtained for the Gospel ; and in the autumn of 1876, feeling sure that these prayers were heard and

would be answered, Mr. Hudson Taylor, now much better in health, prepared to sail with a considerable band of new missionaries. The crisis was serious, and many were the warnings received. Surely it was useless to attempt to extend the work, when at the briefest notice all foreigners might have to leave the country! Still the party sailed, confident of the LORD'S guidance, and fully expecting to find a more hopeful state of affairs upon reaching China.

News at the various ports on the way was scarcely encouraging. Negotiations had failed at Pekin. Sir Thomas Wade had hauled down his flag, and left for the coast to put matters into the admiral's hands!

"But," wrote Mr. Taylor, "*prayer had not failed.*"

A change came over the spirit of the Chinese Government. The great statesman Li Hung-ch'ang followed the English ambassador to the coast, and there was concluded the Chefoo Convention, which opened the door of access more widely than ever before to the heart of the Empire of the East.

On September 13th, 1876, this memorable document was signed; and the welcome news met the travellers as they stepped on Chinese soil.

It seemed incredible—too good to be true! China, the walled kingdom, the haughty empire, whose proud disdain for forty centuries has scorned all peoples but her own; China, whose government, surviving thirty changes of dynasty, still maintains laws and edicts codified two thousand years ago; whose vast

HIS EXCELLENCY LI HUNG-CH'ANG.

and varied literature owns no model but Confucius,* and recognises no greatness but that contained within "the four seas" and the borders of the Flowery Land; China, the mighty hermit nation, her face turned towards the past, her aims conservative, her life self-centred, at last unbars her frowning gates to strangers from the outer world. "How are the mighty fallen!" or rather, should we not say, "How has the Mightiest prevailed!"

* Who lived and wrote about 600 years B.C., and of whom the Chinese still say, "*What Confucius teaches is true; what he leaves untaught is useless; what does not harmonise with his teaching is false*"!

It is noteworthy that this auspicious settlement of affairs occurred just as our brethren were ready to take immediate advantage of it; not one day too soon, nor yet an hour too late. Nearly two years previously they had been asked of GOD, in faith, for widespread itinerant work throughout the nine unoccupied provinces; in due season they were given, came to China, set to work at the study of the language, and began to feel at home amongst the people; and then, unexpectedly, when all seemed furthest from such an issue, freedom of access to the remotest parts of the Empire was secured; and they started right away, under the auspices of the new agreement, the very first to avail themselves of its favourable conditions.

One of the stipulations of the Chefoo Convention was that an Imperial proclamation should be openly posted in every city throughout the eighteen provinces, to the effect that foreigners were at perfect liberty to travel in any part of the Emperor's dominions; that they did so under his direct protection, and were to be received with respect, and in no wise hindered upon their journeys. As the members of the Inland Mission were, in several districts, first to take advantage of this new state of affairs, it happened more than once that, upon their arrival in some distant inland city, the local officials took them to be envoys sent by foreign powers to see whether the proclamation had been duly posted or no; and in some cases in which this had been neglected, their

coming was the signal for an immediate issue of the important document, and the display of every polite attention on the part of the Mandarins.

Thus was prayer answered, and the political affairs of nations once again over-ruled, in the providence of GOD, to the accomplishment of His own designs.

Far and wide, during the next few years, our brethren travelled, scattering the good seed of the Kingdom in many regions never before traversed by the Christian missionary, making journeys of long duration and no little peril, in remarkable safety and peace.

Details of these itinerations are given in the following chapters. But before passing on to this new period, we must notice one more event of the year thus ending, which marks, as a milestone, the close of the first decade of our Mission's history.

The end of May 1876 witnessed the first anniversary meetings ever held in connection with the China Inland Mission, when, at the Mildmay Conference Hall, the abundant mercies of the years that had elapsed since the sailing of the *Lammermuir*,* were commemorated with gratitude to GOD.

Only ten years since that spring day of many memories—but how much progress they had witnessed! At the commencement of this brief period eleven out of the eighteen provinces of China proper

* See vol. i., p. 267.

had been entirely without any Protestant missionary. No Christian churches were found within their borders. Amongst thousands of their populous towns and cities no evangelist had ever preached the gift of GOD and the love of CHRIST.

In the remaining seven more favoured provinces, containing the open ports, missionary work, although long established, had not embraced many centres. In KIANG-SU, Shanghai was the only station; and in CHEH-KIANG resident missionaries were found in Ningpo and Hang-chau alone, two out of no less than *ninety* important, walled cities contained within its borders. At the lowest computation these seven provinces represented a population of fully one hundred millions, but they had not one hundred missionaries all told, not one man to a million! And beyond them stretched away the utter darkness of unbroken heathenism—north, south, and west, to the remote regions of unreached Mongolia, the snow-clad heights of distant Thibet, and the troubled borderland of the frontiers of Burmah and YUN-NAN.

At the end of these ten years,—or ten years and a half, if we include the signing of the Chefoo Convention and the close of 1876—how different the aspect of affairs!

In connection with our own Mission, which at the commencement of this period had only just come into existence, sixty missionaries and missionaries' wives were on the field, working in fifty-two stations and out-stations, and assisted by a band of over

seventy native helpers. They were labouring in five provinces, two of which had been amongst the unoccupied eleven; and in twenty-eight of the stations little bands of Christians had been gathered, by the blessing of GOD.

During these ten and a half years more than £52,000 had been contributed for the expenses of the work, unasked, save of GOD; and of this sum about £3,700 was on deposit, to be used as needed for the evangelisation of the remaining nine still unoccupied inland provinces.

But more than all this, an open way had been made, in answer to prayer, by which the men who had been asked of GOD, and given for this purpose, might gain access to these hitherto unentered regions. At Bhamô and amongst the mountains bordering on YUN-NAN, a work had been commenced which was already permeating the neighbouring populations, with, at least, some knowledge of the written Word of GOD. As we shall see in our next chapter, HO-NAN and HU-NAN, in the great heart of China, had heard the name of CHRIST; SHAN-SI had been visited, for the first time by C. I. M. missionaries; and up the broad stream of the Han three little bands had gone to herald the glad tidings of the Cross amongst the millions that cover the wide plains of SHEN-SI and KAN-SUH, and carry the tide of life away to the far-reaching northern boundary—the great Imperial Wall.

Thus the first ten and a half years of our work,

though uphill, and beset with many difficulties, were not fruitless. A foundation had been laid for wider efforts to come, and experience had been gathered for the future, through many mistakes and failures, as well as through a considerable measure of GOD-given success. Above all, faith had been tried and strengthened; and His servants more than ever encouraged to look to the LORD alone for the supply of all the needs connected with the Mission; needs both spiritual and temporal, whether of helpers, funds, openings in difficult spheres, or access to hardened hearts; at all times, and in all ways, "GOD, alone," having proved "sufficient for GOD'S own work."

"OH ROCK, ROCK! HAST THOU OPENED!"

"JESUS went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people."—MATT. ix. 35.

"Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth."—MARK i. 38.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." MARK xvi. 15.

* * * * *

"To whom He was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand."—ROM. xv. 21.

CHAPTER XIII.

"SOUTH OF THE RIVER," AND "SOUTH OF THE LAKE."

"OH Rock, Rock! when wilt thou open?" Three hundred years ago the cry rung out across blue dancing water, from the lips of a lonely pilgrim on a narrow sunlit shore. Eternal summer round him, infinite depths of cloudless azure, mysterious forest-shadows behind a wealth of green, perfect in every detail, and exuberant with life; but he could see nothing, feel nothing, save emptiness and longing for a spiritual beauty to transcend this earthly show.

Macao's island beach was worn by his solitary foot-track. His eyes were dim with gazing across its summer sea. His heart became faint with asking, as he so long had asked, "*Rock, Rock! when wilt thou open?*" Thirty years of exile and almost fruitless effort lay behind him. But what was thirty years? Quenchless zeal burned in this monk, Valignani. When he knelt to his crucifix did he not see the symbol of victory? Did not that crucified Conqueror, by His very death in weakness, claim the adamantine Empire of the East? What mission so

high as to subdue that Empire—to realise that claim!

"Rock! Rock!" How unreachable the millions of this China! How stony its cold pride, its haughty, self-sufficient calm, its supreme contempt for all other lands and races! How overwhelming its extent, hugely bulking on the outskirts of the mediæval world; a congeries of nations, a swarming, populous cloudland, unknown, unmapped, unmeasured! How impregnable the fortress of its ancient prejudices, philosophies, faiths, ethics, civilisation! Yet "Thou shalt open!" is the cry of this enthusiast. And year by year he labours in that faith.

How far his keen eyes, fixed on the rocky coast-line, pierce; how burning is their fire! He may not follow the track they take across the sunlit sea, but he will live and die in the attempt. He has left fatherland and friends for this. Halfway across the world, an all but impossible journey in his day, lies all he loves on earth—hidden, estranged, never again to greet him. Whatever life can give he has relinquished for this long exile. Was there not glory in it—heroism?

But, after all, to fail! To fight for thirty years; to crucify the flesh and mind, and gather up existence in a single spiritual effort towards a great ideal—in vain! At the end to see the goal apparently no nearer than when he first began—the same unconquerable rock-walls rising there, absolute, frowning, unscaled, impregnable. Might not even that strong

heart falter, those clear eyes grow "dim with gazing on the pilot stars"?

In the broad noonday many a time his appeal rang up to the infinite blue, but no answer breathed to him on the changeless summer air. Often at midnight, beneath the deep vault of heaven, must he have questioned his life-work, his supreme effort, interrogating GOD. But no message pierced the darkness.

He died there as he lived there, still questioning "How long?"

Macao's little island, not far from the lonely grave of his great leader Xavier, also in China seas, is the Jesuit's resting-place. Through the centuries that have vanished since that devoted heart ceased to beat, we look back at his figure standing with arms outstretched toward the land of his desire, and hear again his sentence echo along the lonely shore where the changing tides still beat:—

"Oh Rock, Rock! when wilt thou open?"

In 1876, three hundred years later, the adamantine walls went down. The Rock was opened.

When, upon September 13th in that memorable year, China's greatest modern statesman finally affixed the seal of Imperial assent to the Chefoo Convention, freedom of access was at last secured to every province in the vast Empire. Valignani was never allowed to set foot on the forbidden shore. Dr. Morrison died in 1834, never having been permitted to penetrate beyond the suburbs of Canton. In 1842 and 1860 the Treaties of Nan-king and Pekin

marked the withdrawal of China's long resistance to the presence of foreigners. And now, in 1876, their right to travel everywhere was fully recognised ; the purposes of GOD thus prevailing in the counsels of men, and answering the prayers of thousands of His people from the days of Valignani to our own, making the modern echo of the missionary monk's appeal :—

"Oh Rock, Rock, *hast* thou opened!"

The door into inland China, unbarred at last to the Gospel, was never to be closed again. The vast interior, hitherto unreached by the combined efforts of all Protestant Missions, was thus thrown open to the coming of GOD'S messengers of peace. Few and far between at first, in much weakness, and with no confidence, save in GOD, did the pioneers go forth ; to be followed by an unbroken and ever-increasing succession of those who, in the same spirit, should enter into their labours, and widen the circle of blessing.

First among the nine unevangelised provinces to be visited were HO-NAN and HU-NAN, two of the largest and neediest of all. Century after century the millions of their teeming population had gone down into Christless graves ; only to be followed by as many more, whose dark and Christless lives seemed scarcely less sad, less pitiful.

HO-NAN, north of the Yang-tsi, and in the very heart of China, is larger than England and Wales put together, and contains no less than a hundred and eighteen important walled cities, and a population

more than three times that of Scotland. For the evangelisation of such a region how insufficient the resources of the whole Mission would have seemed, much more the weakness of one solitary man! Yet, with hopefulness and courage, Henry Taylor, in the early spring of 1875,* prepared to go forth in the strength of GOD, single handed, to the task.

"I turn my eyes towards the many millions of HO-NAN, my future sphere, with much desire," he wrote. "A whole province is a vast field to occupy! But if the GOD of all grace fill us, power and blessing must attend our efforts."

Early in April 1875, in company with a good native brother named Chang, he set his face northward. Ten days after leaving Wu-ch'ang, the boundary was crossed, and they entered the populous plain that forms the south-eastern portion of HO-NAN. For nearly eight weeks they travelled and preached freely, visiting many important places, and meeting with not a few whose interest in the Gospel seemed deep and real.

At Ru-ning Fu, the first prefectural city, they met with unusual cordiality. The large, well-furnished hall of the HU-PEH *literati* was placed at their disposal, and they were invited, as travellers and teachers from that province, to use it free of charge. They

* This journey and the two following, in HU-NAN and SHEN-SI, were taken while the Chefoo Convention was pending. We, however, insert them here to connect them with all the other journeys made at this period.

thought it more prudent, however, to put up at an inn outside the gates.

Among those who seemed most interested in the Gospel were four men of whom the missionaries had good hope. The first of these, an old vegetarian named Hu, came on the evening of their arrival, and listened with marked attention to all they had to say. For years he had been seeking a GOD, a living GOD, who should satisfy the longings of his heart; and in idolatry he had found no rest. But the Gospel seemed to meet his need, and he grasped its teachings with remarkable clearness. Chang found his house filled with idols, which had evidently been treated with religious care. The old man, pointing to them, said—

"These I have held to and worshipped, because I had nothing better; now I have found JESUS, and I let them go! This doctrine I know to be a true one; my conscience tells me it is so."

With real reluctance this earnest inquirer parted from the visitors who had brought him so much blessing; and great was his joy on learning of their anticipated return in a few months.

"Come and open a house in our city," he urged; "there are many here who, like me, are seeking the true Light."

The missionaries came back in the autumn.

"We shall see the old vegetarian Hu," they said.

Eagerly they sought him out, but only to learn that, on earth, they should meet no more. During

their brief absence he had passed away, trusting in the LORD JESUS. The first witnesses for CHRIST in vast HO-NAN, they had been just in time to bring the knowledge of salvation to this seeking soul. Had they come but a few months later, what a difference to him!

Sixteen years have passed by since then, and still it is sadly, awfully true, that "a million a month in China are dying without GOD."* Nearly two hundred millions have gone since that day; and for the vast majority of them no knowledge of the Truth, until too late. Had *we* but been a little earlier, a little more self-sacrificing, faithful, earnest, Christlike—how different it might have been! Shall we not listen to the old man's plea, his last request, to the only Christians he had ever met in all his long, dark heathen life of seeking and unrest—"*Do come and open a house in our city! There are many here who, like me, are seeking the true Light*"?

Of the three other men in whom they had been specially interested, the evangelists found on their return to Ru-ning, that Wan, an intelligent young schoolmaster, had left the city and could not be traced. Two, however, remained. One of these was a scholarly man, a young doctor of the name of Mu. Both he and T'ang appeared very sincere in their faith in CHRIST; and fearing they might never meet their missionary friend again, they desired at once

* This quotation is from Dr. Guinness' well-known poem, based on the estimate of 350,000,000 as the population of China.

to be baptised. Upon hearing, however, of his expected return, they were content to wait, meanwhile seeking to make the Saviour known amongst their families and friends. It was with much thankfulness that Mr. Taylor subsequently found them both still holding on their way, Mu Sien-Seng especially bearing a bright testimony to the saving power of the Gospel

As the examinations were going on in the city the evangelists did not stay long, but turned their steps northward; and in the closing days of November found themselves nearing Chau-kia-k'eo, an important trading centre at the junction of two rivers. This place, although lacking the political status of a city, is recognised to be the most populous town between Pekin and Hankow—a busy, crowded, commercial settlement, influential in the affairs of the province. Here, for eight days, they preached the Gospel in the streets, to large attentive audiences, "very good-natured, straightforward, and pleasant in manner." Leaving this busy mart, they pushed northward to the capital, and proclaimed the Word of Life within the venerable walls of K'ai-fung Fu, one of the most ancient cities in the world. Their movements were closely watched by the Mandarin's runners, who never left them for a moment while they were in the city, and the people at first seemed afraid to buy their books; but as soon as the spell was broken by some bold spirit, sales were as free as usual. Scholars daily visited their inn, and seemed

pleased to find that the foreigner was not a Roman Catholic priest.

One of the military Mandarins of the city came every evening to see them. He could read and write Arabic freely, and was a leading member of a large and wealthy Mohammedan community settled in the place. Well versed in the doctrines of his own religion, he had also given much attention to the study of Christianity, which he freely acknowledged to be superior to Mohammedanism; but his mind was still undecided as to the faith he ought to hold.

"We did what we could," wrote Mr. Henry Taylor, "to lead him to a clearer understanding of the Gospel, and have prayed much for him."

"Nothing would give me more pleasure," he said, when we were leaving, "than to see you permanently settled in our city."

But anti-foreign feeling in K'ai-fung Fu was then, and still is, exceptionally bitter, and the missionaries could not remain. Three Europeans from Pekin, who had visited the place only two years before, to inquire into the condition of the Jewish colony within its walls, had been obliged to retire very speedily even the inn they occupied having been razed to the ground.

The journey from the capital westward to Ho-nan Fu, a distance of about one hundred and fifty miles, was not without its trials and dangers. The country was barren, and the people poor; beginning even then to suffer from the scarcity that developed into the

awful famine of 1878. As the travellers passed along they found the hills infested with robbers and banditti; and there seemed to be thousands of poor destitute creatures living in miserable hovels like little caves, dug out of the mountain sides.

Though without an escort, and carrying no weapons for self-defence, Mr. Henry Taylor and his companion were protected, and kept in the perfect peace of the LORD'S presence. They reached their destination and preached the Gospel in the streets of Ho-nan Fu, for several days; but their efforts in that city were not followed by any apparent success. The people seemed utterly uninterested, and the message, like seed sown upon hard ground, had to be proclaimed in faith, and left.

About five miles south of Ho-nan Fu there is a famous pass called the "Dragon's Gate." The limestone cliffs on either side rise to a height of several hundred feet, and contain magnificent caverns, each occupied by five colossal figures thirty feet high, cut in the solid rock, upon which the varying seasons of two hundred years have had but little effect.

"We entered each of the caverns," Henry Taylor wrote; "and as our eyes became accustomed to the darkness, which must inspire idolaters with awe, we saw those hideous idols frowning down upon us. We lifted our voices in prayer, and besought GOD-JEHOVAH to speed the day in which these delusions will be judged, and thrown to the moles and bats.

"Numberless miniature idols are carved in the mountain side almost to its summit. From beneath the caverns

beautiful streams of clear, cool water gush forth, mingling with the river which runs at the bottom of the pass. We told the Gospel story to an old priest in charge, but he did not at all appear to relish our discourse, and showed his disapproval by walking away.

"On our homeward way we preached and sold books at several cities, in some of which the people gave much attention to our message. Any one of these cities would afford work for a lifetime; how little can be done for the poor people in a passing visit! There are nine prefectural cities, or Fu, in this province, besides one hundred and nine occupying positions of varying importance. If the LORD should but give us a Christian worker for each of these one hundred and eighteen our joy would be full, although our desires are larger even than this."

Early next year (1876) Mr. Henry Taylor made a third long journey in HO-NAN, in company with Mr. George Clarke, one of the eighteen brethren recently given to the work. At Ru-ning Fu they had the joy of finding the two inquirers, Mu and T'ang, still leading Christian lives, and earnestly desiring baptism. Of the former Mr. Clarke wrote:—

"The LORD has enabled him to stand firm and witness a good confession. Soon after he believed two of his children died. The people said it was because of his new religion, but he remained steadfast. Since Mr. Henry Taylor was last here he has suffered much persecution. His brothers and kinsfolk have separated from him, and have only given him enough land to grow six bushels of wheat a year. He has spoken faithfully to his neighbours, and says there are about thirty who are interested in the Gospel."

Outside the walls of Ru-ning, in a little stream,

among some quiet graves, these brethren Mu and T'ang were baptised, early in April—the first in HO-NAN, as far as we can tell, thus to confess CHRIST.

In the same month Mr. Henry Taylor was able to rent a house in the neighbouring city of Choh-shan Hien; and later on in the summer he and Mr. Clarke spent six happy weeks there amongst the people. All seemed quiet and favourable, until the scholars of the place began to oppose the foreigners, and a serious riot ensued. For several days and nights the city was in an uproar, and the lives of the missionaries were in danger. At last they were obliged to return to Wu-ch'ang till the trouble had passed away. For several years all efforts at obtaining a settlement in HO-NAN proved fruitless. But during the terrible famine of 1878 Mr. Henry Taylor and Mr. Clarke returned to the province, carrying funds for the relief of the sufferers. They made their way to the capital, witnessing scenes of horror indescribable.

"Never in the annals of China," wrote the Chinese Viceroy, "has there been such suffering as there is now in HO-NAN. For some time back the people have been eating human flesh, but now they are opening skulls and devouring their contents, and grinding down bones to powder, which they mix with water to drink."

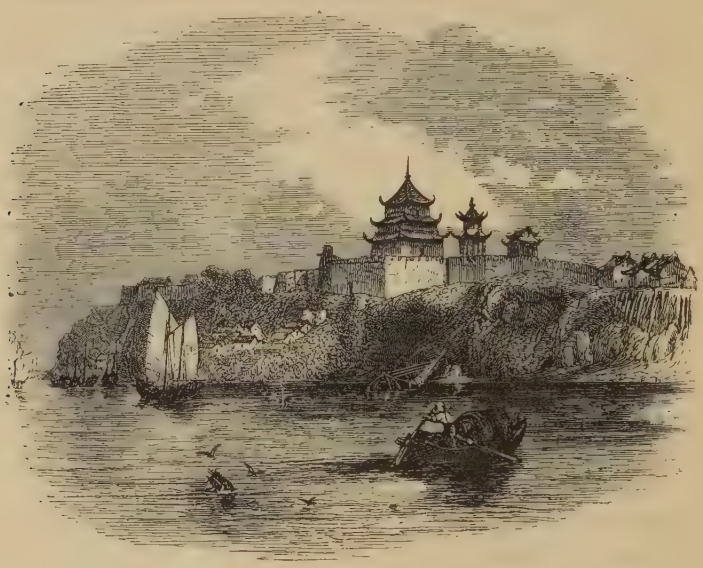
And yet, incredible as it may seem, the anti-foreign feeling was so strong, that the officials at the capital declined the aid which our brethren had gone to distribute.

Poor HO-NAN, and poor China! Desolated by famine and flood, by opium and idolatry, how deep her darkness, how long her waiting for the light! But gilding her distant horizon do we not catch the dawn of day? From the borders of Mongolia to the frontiers of Thibet, and from east to west of the long courses of her mighty rivers, pass heralds of the promised morn. Oh that their number were multiplied a thousandfold as the last great cry is heard —"Behold, the Bridegroom cometh! go ye out to meet Him."

Larger and more populous than HO-NAN, HU-NAN was also visited with the Gospel in 1875, and proved an even darker region, still more opposed to the entrance of the Light.

This province "*South of the Lake*," as its name implies, is more than twice the size of Ireland, with fully three times its population. Generation after generation, sixteen millions of precious souls within its limits, pass across the narrow stage of life, all treading the downward road, all wandering afar from GOD, and with no hand, no voice to guide them home to His open heart of love.

In the early summer of 1875 Mr. Judd was set free from work at Wu-ch'ang for a brief itinerant journey, and taking with him two native assistants, started for the northern border of this province. One hundred and sixty miles up the great river brought them to the city of Yoh-chau, beautifully situated at the



YOH-CHAU.

junction of the Tong-t'ing lake with the waters of the Yang-tsi. Retarded by a head wind during their nine days on the river, they visited several villages and towns, in some of which the people readily bought books, and listened with marked attention.

In the bright sunlight of a June morning they entered Yoh-chau, and walked through its busy streets. At first the people seemed uncertain as to whether Mr. Judd were really a foreigner or not; and even when the fact became known, he was not specially molested. Tree-clad mountainous heights rose toward the east beyond the city, and westward lay the broad, sea-like expanse of the great lake; and

then the million-peopled province—three hundred miles of heathen darkness. A quiet Sunday followed the arrival of the strangers; who were able without difficulty to rent a little house. Soon, however, unfriendly feeling began to be apparent, and before many days were over serious trouble arose. The local Mandarin refused to protect the visitors, and this becoming known their lives were endangered. All efforts to live down the trouble proved vain. A small gunboat was sent to escort them out of the neighbourhood, and, having no choice in the matter, they were obliged to go.

Later on the native brethren returned alone to Yoh-chau, and had many opportunities of scattering the good seed without molestation; and in January 1877 Mr. Judd again visited it, on his long and interesting journey across the province into KWEI-CHAU and SI-CH'UEN. Up to the present time, however, no Protestant missionary has been able to obtain a permanent footing in HU-NAN. We have stations on its northern border; and much devoted, self-sacrificing work has been done in wide-spread itinerations during many years. But, as yet, no settled efforts have been possible. Its sixteen millions are without one single missionary to-day.

CHAPTER XIV.

A TWO MONTHS' TRIP TO SHEN-SI.

SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER, 1876.

EARLY in August 1876, SHEN-SI, another vast unevangelised province, was visited, Messrs. Baller and King being in this instance the pioneers. At Hankow, opposite Wu-ch'ang, on the broad Yang-tsi—a station which our readers must always conceive of as the central-China starting-point for the Interior—they were kindly received by Dr. John, of the London Missionary Society, in whose large church they found a native of the distant northern province of SHEN-SI, whither they hoped to travel.

"There is good waterway," he told them, "up the Han, as far as to Fan-ch'eng;* and from thence two or three much-travelled roads lead on to Si-gan, the capital of SHEN-SI."

So a Fan-ch'eng boat was hired, and the brethren commended to GOD for their new work.

On a warm August evening they made their way down the busy, thronging streets of Wu-ch'ang,

* An important city four hundred miles from Hankow.

crossed the broad Yang-tsi, and entered the mouth of its great tributary, the swiftly-flowing Han,—there to seek out amongst crowded masses of shipping the little house-boat that was now their home.

A fortnight later, on the last day of the month, they saw the sun set behind the western hills of Fan-ch'eng. The far-reaching, turreted walls of the city looked across the wide, peaceful river to Siang-yang. Both places, accessible as well as populous, were yet fully four hundred miles away from the nearest mission station!

In their busy streets, on the banks of the river, the evangelists preached CHRIST. But what could a three days' visit effect? They must not linger; for they were still only in the province of HU-PEH, in parts of which, at any rate, the Gospel had been long and successfully preached; while beyond them, for many a weary week's journey to north and west, stretched other regions, equally populous, equally needy, and all without one single witness for the Truth.

Travelling was difficult and costly, for the Government examinations, drawing thousands of scholars from their provincial homes to the important centres, necessitated in some places a military guard to maintain order. After a little delay, however, Messrs. Baller and King secured a boat to Hing-gan Fu, the nearest prefectural city in SHEN-SI, about 400 miles farther north-west.

The first important mart they reached was thronged with a busy crowd, chiefly men from the northern

provinces; and news of their arrival quickly spread. The military commander of the place sent word that he desired to see the foreigners at his house.

"At ten o'clock on the morning appointed," writes Mr. Baller, "we breakfasted with him, and found that he had some acquaintance with the leading facts of the Gospel. He was the possessor of a number of foreign articles, amongst them a copy of Williams' Chinese-English Dictionary. He asked us to explain its plan and arrangement, and appeared gratified that a foreigner should have expended so much time in the production of such a work.

"The meal set before us was prepared as nearly in foreign fashion as the cook's ability allowed. Four or five wine-glasses were placed by the side of our plates, and our host told us of certain other foreigners who had drunk and made merry at his table, begging us to do likewise. Subsequently he informed us that there are eight Romish priests, foreigners, stationed in the city, and that they have a large chapel and many followers. He gave them a good character as convivial guests, but complained of the way in which they and their converts continually appeal to him for interference on their behalf in matters of dispute."

Eight Roman Catholic priests, in one far inland station, conducting a long-established and numerically successful work; and as far as Protestant Missions are concerned, only the briefest passing visit of an itinerant pioneer evangelist! How is it that we so often meet this state of things?

The remainder of their journey led through a beautiful mountainous region, where the swift Han sweeps down in numerous rapids, and day by day they passed slowly up amongst the wooded heights

SCENE ON THE UPPER HAN.

bordering the rushing river, impressed by the grandeur of the ever-changing scene.

Yun-yang, the last Fu city of HU-PEH, was reached in mid-September; a good many books were sold there, and an attentive hearing found for the Gospel message. Large congregations gathered about the evangelists, and the local mandarin noticed their presence by sending four soldiers to protect them in case of need, and to explain to the people that the object of these foreign visitors was not to cut off men's tails, but merely to sell books, and to preach the doctrine!

Three days later the border was crossed, and SHEN-SI entered at last. A quiet Sunday was spent at one of the first *Hien* cities, outside and inside whose walls considerable numbers of people came together to listen.

"One group interested us much," wrote Mr. Baller. "They gathered around us as we stood preaching close to the mandarin's office. One of the men amongst them asked many intelligent questions about the LORD JESUS, and acquired a good understanding of the leading truths of the Gospel."

The following Sunday found the travellers busy at Hing-gan, the prefectural city of that part of the province, preaching to large congregations the glad tidings of salvation, rarely if ever before proclaimed within those walls.

"The people seemed to understand a good deal of what we said, and appeared more intelligent than many farther south. Some one brought us a seat and gave us tea. Both in the new and old cities we were favourably received; and at night returned to our boat truly grateful for such open doors. On the following day we preached in five or six different parts of the city, and were, as before, well received. We met with many Mohammedans, who listened with great attention. One of the things that seemed to impress them most was the fact of the Resurrection of the LORD JESUS. As I pointed out the superiority of a living CHRIST over all the sages long since passed away, the thought seemed to strike them as new and strange. May they be led to seek Him who sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty on high! We had a long talk with an interest-

ing young Mohammedan, alone, about the Gospel. He seemed to understand, and showed a very encouraging spirit of enquiry."

Although the openings seemed so favourable, Messrs. Baller and King were not able to make any prolonged stay on this first visit. Their funds had run short, owing to the unusual expenses of the way, and they were compelled to return to Hankow for further supplies. But though brief their journey was not without visible results in blessing; one man was converted to GOD, and subsequently baptised, as a direct fruit of this early SHEN-SI itineration.

The long run down-river was quickly made, the travellers reaching their starting-point in October 1876, rather more than two months after they had first set out. They were warmly welcomed back as the bearers of cheering tidings, and had much to tell of the goodness of GOD in giving them so free an entrance into districts hitherto unreached by Protestant missionaries—much to tell, and much to learn, for the Chefoo Convention had been signed during their absence, and all the vast Interior was now open to such work as they had done, and to more permanent efforts.

CHAPTER XV.

C.I.M. PIONEERS IN SHAN-SI.

OCTOBER 1876—JANUARY 1877.

SHAN-SI, the long and narrow north country which has since become famous, both on account of the sufferings endured by its inhabitants during the awful years of famine, and through the remarkable triumphs achieved by the Gospel in its southern regions, was in these days a *terra incognita* to the outside world. Six or seven hundred miles long by about three hundred broad, hilly, well watered, and beautiful, very rich in mineral resources, coal and iron both being found in large quantities, this province possesses a healthy, bracing climate, far more suited to Europeans than that of Southern China. Wheat is extensively cultivated, while Indian corn, rice, millet, and other grains are also to be found, besides fruit in abundance.

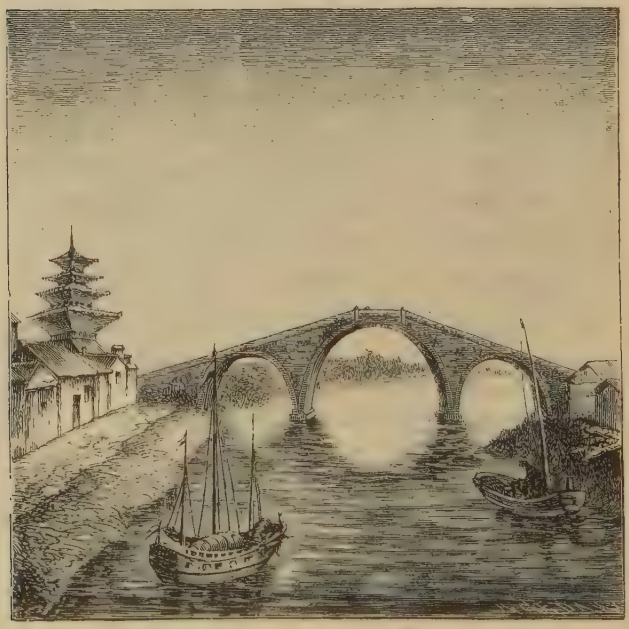
Such is the SHAN-SI of to-day, with a population, at the lowest estimate, of nine millions; but at the time of our brethren's first visit matters were not in so flourishing a condition. No rain had fallen for nearly two years, and widespread destitution prevailed.

In the cool of an autumn evening towards the middle of October 1876, after a day of happy communion and special waiting upon GOD with the friends at Chin-kiang, Messrs. James and Turner went on board the little native boat that was to take them up the Yang-tsi to Nan-king—the first sixty miles of their long and difficult journey. There, crossing the great river to its northern side, they soon left behind them the familiar province of KIANG-SU, and started overland for south SHAN-SI, passing through GAN-HWUY, still desolated by traces of the great rebellion, which twenty years before had carried off so many millions of its inhabitants. They could not but be sadly reminded, as they journeyed day after day for a fortnight through this great and needy province—half as large again as Scotland, and containing between sixty and seventy walled cities—that the only Protestant missionaries labouring for its enlightenment were our two solitary brethren at the capital.

"Our hearts are heavy," wrote Mr. Turner, "as we enter these ruined cities, and think of the scenes of bloodshed witnessed here, and of the present condition of those who once inhabited the now desolate scene. They have passed away, and it is too late to reach them. They have gone to their reward—the reward of idolatry and sin. And the few who remain, alas! are hurrying on to the same sad doom. There is no one—no one—to tell them of JESUS before they swiftly drift beyond our reach."

A wild and barren pass across the Tsing-lin-kuan

brought them within sight of the great, and now populous plain that forms the northern part of the province, and stretches right across the border into HO-NAN. Near the summit they found a few tea-shops, and a number of people, pilgrims like themselves, amongst whom they scattered the good seed of the Kingdom. At the highest point of the pass, a tunnel-like arch about forty feet long pierced through to the northern side of the hills, where the travellers obtained a beautiful view of the wide-spreading country beyond. The crimsoning autumn



BRIDGE OVER A CHINESE STREAM.

leaves formed a striking contrast to the silvery tints of the grasses and the willows' bright green, while over all the fair autumnal scene the slowly setting sun cast a rich glow. With hearts full of gratitude to GOD for the many enjoyments He loves to mingle with the service of His people, even in heathen lands, the brethren passed down the plain, and found a resting place in a pretty wayside village, whose one long, winding street was embellished in the centre by a fine bridge. Here a large crowd soon gathered about the preachers, the people listening with great attention until dark, when many followed them to the inn ; and the missionaries continued, far into the night, telling the glad tidings of salvation in CHRIST to those who never before had heard His Name.

In northern GAN-HWUY the distressed condition of the inhabitants, in consequence of the prolonged seasons of drought, became more and more sadly apparent. They met "hundreds of people all miserably clad, and looking starved and wretched, proceeding south, because of the scarcity of food." But the worst had yet to be. Not until two years later was the crisis of the famine reached.

A busy Sunday was spent in Poh-chau, on the borders of HO-NAN, where a number of SHAN-SI men heard the Gospel for the first time. But they were still far from their destination. Two hundred miles of country, had yet to be crossed by cart—no easy undertaking in China! Little can the reader guess, as he quickly scans the story, the physical

miseries involved by this "celestial" mode of travel. Little can he conceive the Chinese carts—those indescribable vehicles—that jolt, springless, over roads compared to some of which a ploughed field is smooth!

The broad, swift Yellow River was crossed near K'ai-fung Fu—a mighty stream, exceeding the Yang-tsi in volume. The native ferry boats were of good size, the one in which they found themselves having on board "two carts, forty horses and mules, besides cattle, and no fewer than sixty men, some of whom carried burdens."

A full month had elapsed since the commencement of their journey ere the travellers began to approach SHAN-SI; but on Wednesday, November 15th, the border was reached, and the province entered for the first time by C.I.M. missionaries.

Like the SHEN-SI pioneers, Messrs. Turner and James were unable to make any lengthened stay, their funds having run out; but they spent three weeks in the southern prefectures of the province, and visited seven cities, besides many smaller places. They had good opportunities for preaching and selling books, and gathered much valuable information for future use.

The last Sunday in November found them at P'ing-yang Fu, a large and busy place; and then turning southward, through a well-cultivated and populous plain, they made towards the great river Han. In the depth of winter they crossed the

mountainous heart of HO-NAN, and Christmas Day found them entering HU-PEH, on their way to Fan-ch'eng. Here the road was gladly exchanged for the river, and a fortnight's steady descent with the stream brought them to Hankow early in January 1877—a journey of seventeen hundred miles, through four inland provinces, occupying nearly three months, lying behind them.

CHAPTER XVI.

TO THE FAR NORTH-WEST AND BACK.

OCTOBER 1876—APRIL 1877.

1876—The year that witnessed the signing of the Chefoo Convention, had passed away; but its closing months had been eventful, as regards the evangelisation of Inland China, to others beside the two whose footsteps we have just traced. With what surprise and interest did the returning travellers learn that no fewer than eight brethren, in four parties, had gone afield during their brief absence, including Messrs. Judd and Broumton, who had just started on a long and important journey to Kwei-yang in the far south-west.

New Year's day 1877, found these evangelists widely scattered; the two last-mentioned brethren travelling through HU-NAN, in the heart of China; Messrs. Cameron and Nicoll established in their new station at I-chang, *en route* for the great province of SI-CH'UEN; Messrs. King and Budd itinerating on the Si-gan plain of central SHEN-SI; and beyond them, in the previously unvisited province of KAN-SUH,

Messrs. Easton and Parker seeking an entrance for the Gospel.

The four last set out together upon their north-

LAO-HO-K'EO ON THE HAN.

ward way up the Han as far as Lao-ho-k'eo, which they reached at the end of November. Thence a fortnight's difficult tramp over rough mountainous roads, through a poor country, where people seemed

few and provisions short, brought them to their first destination, Si-gan, the large and busy metropolis of SHEN-SI. Tired enough physically, but bright and hopeful in spirit, they entered at once upon their work; Messrs. Easton and Parker preparing to travel eight days westward, to KAN-SUH; Messrs. King and Budd to preach in the far-reaching populous plain surrounding the capital.

"We have resolved, in GOD's strength," wrote Mr. King, "to make our journey a season of special waiting upon the LORD for spiritual refreshment and blessing, for more likeness to Himself, more practical holiness and brotherly love. . . . We have lately been much united in prayer together; these times have been precious indeed . . . and comforting to our souls. We cannot but feel that this blessing is probably due to the petitions that are being offered by others on our behalf. Go on praying; we are feeling very insufficient for the solemn and yet glorious work to which we are called; our cry is, 'LORD, make Thy strength perfect in our weakness!'

Of the last Sunday that they were all together Mr. Easton writes:—

"Spent some time to-day on a quiet mountain side, reading Mr. Spurgeon's sermon on 'Predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.' What a blessed hope! I pray that we may indeed be conformed to Him in holiness and zeal while here below. May we, too, be about our Father's business, and eventually see much blessing amongst these cities. I feel that we are like the messengers sent out into the highways and hedges. Pray that we may bring in many to the feast!"

More than fourteen years have passed since those lines were penned, and the writer is still faithfully labouring in the same regions for which his heart was then drawn out in prayer and longing. As he travels now from one to another of the fifteen different stations in which our missionaries are established, and visits the little native churches, numbering altogether nearly two hundred souls, how gratefully must he remember those early days, when, as strangers, homeless, and friendless, the first little band of workers went up to commence the evangelisation of these two great provinces!

December was near its close, and the snow lay thickly over all the scene, when the party at Si-gan divided forces, and Messrs. Easton and Parker set out for KAN-SUH, a large, important province, more than twice the size of Ireland, with a population of at least three million people, but never up to this time even visited by Protestant missionaries.

At Kin-chau, their first stopping place, a large orderly crowd gathered while Mr. Easton preached the Gospel. At first the good folk rather held back from buying books, but when one more daring than the rest had done the deed, others soon followed suit. One man, a Mohammedan, bought a small illustrated tract containing the story of the Prodigal Son. The brochure was returned presently. "I am a follower of the Prophet," remarked the buyer. "I do not want a picture with pigs in it!"

P'ing-liang, a large but somewhat desolate-looking

place, the first prefectural city reached by the travellers, contains about thirty thousand people. Its irregular buildings of mud and wood, border wide, dusty roads, on several of which the brethren met with good audiences, and sold large quantities of books. They left after a brief stay, feeling that many had heard and understood the message of Life in that city.

A fortnight's difficult tramp over the Lung mountains, and across the plain that stretches west to the Yellow River, just within the boundary of the Great Wall, brought the evangelists to the capital, Lan-chau, and to good inns, crowded streets, large book sales, and plenty of visitors, curious to see and hear as much as possible of the foreigner and his new doctrine. A Jewish-looking man bought a copy of Mark's Gospel, and read it through the same evening. Next day, in a crowded tea-shop, he was heard to repeat the whole story from memory, for the benefit of those present, giving a full and correct account of the miracles and many other details.

A large Mohammedan mosque was found near the west gate of the city, which was also supplied with a Roman Catholic chapel. The priest, a native, was residing at a second chapel outside the walls. Thus, the first and only Protestant missionaries who had ever visited Lan-chau, our brethren found two Roman Catholic places of worship, and one, if not more, resident priests!

After a brief stay at the capital, Messrs. Easton

and Parker turned again southward by a different route. Many towns and villages were visited on the way, the last place of much importance being Ts'in-chau, a busy centre composed of six small cities grouped together. Its main street measures fully three miles from east to west. Staying here for several days they had many visitors; amongst them a gentleman who came in one evening from his quarters in a neighbouring inn, and talked for more than an hour.

"'He seemed quite familiar," wrote Mr. Easton, "with the main outlines of the geography of the world, and spoke about matters from a very foreign point of view.

"'Are you aware of the decision of Margary's case?' he asked; alluding also to Livingstone's discoveries in Africa, the late war between France and Germany, etc.

"We proceeded to speak to him about the Gospel, as the one matter of supreme importance, when in a way uncommon in China he openly stated his unbelief, and began to oppose our teachings. He argued earnestly, quoting Confucius with freedom and eloquence. He reproved the native evangelist who was with us, as having 'forgotten his origin'; and said that he himself would not dare to repeat the things this good man was telling the people about JESUS. The evangelist, somewhat roused by such a reproof, took him on his own ground, answering his arguments powerfully. On the question of sin, our visitor said that tradesmen, and others of that class, might be wrong-doers, but he himself certainly was not."

Several days' journey amongst the majestic mountains of the Pe-ling range brought the little party back to the borders of SHEN-SI. At Han-chung they

took to the river, and made their way down to the Yang-tsi, and Chin-kiang, which they reached after an absence of five eventful months, to find that Messrs. King and Budd, coming from the Si-gan plain, had arrived a fortnight before them.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW KWEI-CHAU AND KWANG-SI WERE FIRST REACHED.

JANUARY 1877—SEPTEMBER 1877.

FULLY four million people live in mountainous KWEI-CHAU, a province lying between KWANG-SI and SI-CH'UEN, and covering an area twice as large as that of Scotland. Rice and opium are freely cultivated throughout its fertile valleys; timber grows abundantly upon its hills; and white-lead, copper, quicksilver, and iron are yielded in proportion to the industry of its inhabitants. Twenty years ago in all this important region, with its seventy-three walled cities, numberless towns, and villages, there were no witnesses for CHRIST. No Protestant missionary had ever crossed its border, much less sought to live among its people.

Toward this needy region, on January 2nd, 1877, Messrs. Judd and Broumton set their faces. It was a wintry night, stormy and cold, when they left Wu-ch'ang for the West. To exchange the shelter of the little house on the hill for small, draughty boat-quarters was far from pleasant; but missionaries

in China understand enduring hardness, and life on a bleak river is a comparatively easy thing to face. A week's steady travelling up the broad Yang-tsi brought them to the mouth of the Tung-ting lake in northern HU-NAN, crossing which some seventy miles, they entered the beautiful Yuen river, flowing from the mountainous borderland of KWEI-CHAU. Up this rapid stream, day after day, for three long weeks they travelled through populous HU-NAN, passing numerous towns and cities, in none of which the message of salvation had ever yet been heard. In spite of the turbulent character and strongly anti-

A RIVER SCENE IN CHINA.

foreign feeling of the people, they were everywhere preserved in safety, often finding an attentive hearing, and even a large measure of kindness from officials and populace. But the Imperial proclamation which was to have been posted in every city, in compliance with the stipulations of the Chefoo Convention, was nowhere to be met with in HU-NAN.

"Among a people so unruly and so much opposed to foreigners, its publication would be unsafe," said the officials.

The Yuen river at this stage is quite as beautiful as the loveliest reaches of the Rhine. Abundant verdure, absence of which so often spoils an otherwise charming landscape in China, covers the mountain sides. Their first Sunday was a good one.

"Our boatmen," wrote Mr. Judd, "all gathered to the morning meeting, and paid much attention, as we read and explained the story of the Crucifixion from John xix. Poor fellows! The wonderful tidings seemed almost incredible to them. One of the number tells us that he fully purposes to become a Christian, and hopes to be baptised when he returns to Hankow. After our meeting we went ashore, and preached for some time to the villagers."

A conversation was held with an elderly woman, to whom, as to all the rest, the Gospel-message was new and very strange.

"It is really very kind of you to come so far," she exclaimed, "to tell these good things! Our people do not know. They go continually to the temples, burn incense, and give rice and other things to the priests; and in the end, what becomes of it all?"

What a privilege to be the first to carry the glad tidings of salvation to such souls! Who would not covet it, constrained by love?

The "gods" are active in these regions. Lodged in the cliffs by the river, full sixty feet above the highest water mark, the travellers noticed something singular.

"It is a cupboard made of wood," explained the natives; "how it got there nobody can tell. We believe it contains great treasure. Long ago they tried to reach it from above; a man was let down forty feet over the side of the rocks, but just as he came to the place, a clap of thunder burst overhead. The gods were angry. After that, of course, no one dared to try again."

Higher up in the same stratum a wooden boat is distinctly seen lying lengthways in a narrow cleft, with its side projecting slightly. Only one answer can be obtained to all inquiries:—

"Nobody knows how it got there! The gods have done it!"

Wonderful caverns lie beneath, twenty feet high at the entrance, and rising to a magnificent natural dome seventy feet above the rocky floor, while far below, without, the river rushes.

"We went in a little distance," wrote Mr. Judd; "here crossing a deep crevice, there entering some high vaulted chamber, which the light of our candles scarcely sufficed to reveal. The grandeur of these vast subterranean halls was overpowering, and we were glad to return to our boat out

in the sunshine, rather than seek to penetrate their gloomy depth, which the natives say extends twelve miles into the mountains."

The last part of the river journey, one hundred miles of almost continuous rapids, brought the travellers on February 3rd, a month after leaving Wu-chang, to the borderland of KWEI-CHAU. Then came twelve days' land journey to the capital by coolie-chair, over a lonely mountain road. As far as eye could reach from the summit of the first ascent, beautiful hills and valleys half hidden by drifting clouds, were veiled in pure white snow; while every separate blade of grass, each leaf, twig, branch, and stem, throughout the almost endless forests clothing the steep hillsides, gleamed in the sunlight, delicately encased in its own clear sheath of brilliant ice. The only sound to be heard was the mighty crash with which some forest giant would break down under his icy burden. The only signs of human life were the little villages, or solitary wayside dwellings, where at night the travellers sought shelter.

One evening, arriving at their halting-place tired by the hard day's tramp and stiff with cold, they found a welcome and a fire at one of these lonely cottages. Mine host, a simple mountaineer, was interested in his unwonted guests, and especially in the Gospel story, unfolded for the first time to his wondering mind. Many travellers had passed that way since his boyhood, and many a talk had they had while resting at the wayside inn; but none ever

spoke such things as these before! The night wore on. Still he listened; and still they told him more of the strange Glad Tidings.

"He became deeply interested in the Gospel," wrote Mr. Judd. "I trust we may meet him in glory."

A week of such travelling brought the evangelists to the city of Chen-yuen, famous for its strongly anti-foreign character. Three years before, Augustus Margary passing that way on his last journey, encountered considerable difficulty, his boat being dragged ashore by the people and burned. Subsequently some Romish priests had made a *détour* requiring ten days extra on the road, rather than pass through Chen-yuen. Messrs. Judd and Broumton naturally anticipated opposition, and earnestly sought protection of GOD as they neared the town. Their luggage, which they had sent on ahead, hoping it might escape observation, was stopped at the gates, where a little crowd awaited their arrival. But the official, after examining the missionaries' passports, allowed them to proceed, and they entered the busy streets, passing unhindered among the thronging crowd; and although recognised as foreigners and stared at with surprise, no unfriendly feeling was shown.

Many of the towns and cities reached towards the end of the journey were ruined and desolate. The raiding Miao-tsi, a hardy and unsubdued aboriginal tribe of the Nan-ling mountains, are always at daggers drawn with their more prosperous neighbours

of the plain, and, frequently the victims of the latter's injustice and rapacity, they come down at times to destroy the temples and burn the cities of their hated foes. Mr. Broumton's interest was much stirred on behalf of these wild and lawless hill-men, for whom none seemed to care.*

February was half through before the travellers sighted their destination, the capital of KWEI-CHAU. A fair scene spread before them when, the last steep climb accomplished, they looked down in the early morning sunshine on the plain of Kwei-yang lying at their feet, and the city itself, beautiful with its trees and greenery, backed by the distant mountains.

A remarkable man, whose history is perhaps without parallel amongst foreigners in the Empire of the East, was living in Kwei-yang at this time. European by birth, he had become almost naturalised in China; and having rendered valuable service to the Government of KWEI-CHAU during the recent Miao-tsi rebellion, had been raised to official rank and influence as a reward. Familiar with English and French, he had also completely mastered the conversational Chinese of official circles, and was thoroughly at home in the life and habits of the ruling class. Upon their arrival at Kwei-yang

* The Miao-tsi, "children of the soil," form one of the largest of over a hundred aboriginal tribes found in the west of China. They are an interesting, intelligent people, unfettered by idolatry or ancestral worship, and offer a promising field for Christian effort. No missionary has yet settled among them. Nor have the Scriptures even been translated into their languages.

Messrs. Judd and Broumton found a cordial welcome at his house. He insisted upon their becoming his guests, treating them with every attention. And for ten days they occupied the quarters thus generously provided; meeting the local officials and gentry, who came in considerable numbers upon hearing that foreign visitors had arrived, and were thus brought into contact with the Gospel, which otherwise might never have reached them.

In the busiest parts of the city they found good sales for their Scriptures and tracts, and attentive audiences. Empty houses were scarce, and Mr. Broumton might have had serious difficulty in obtaining a residence, but that their host placed a building of his own at their disposal. After this Mr. Judd returned to his distant station and work, leaving his companion to hold the fort alone in far-off KWEI-CHAU—the only Protestant missionary in the whole of that great province, seven weeks' journey, at least, from any Christian friends.

Mr. Judd did not retrace his steps through HU-NAN, across which he and his companions had come, a determined effort having been made by the people of that province to resist the entrance of foreigners.

"The highest official in HU-NAN," he writes, "is the foreigner's enemy, and his influence has spread to the lowest of the people. A large organisation has been formed, with a number of HU-NAN mandarins at its head, for the purpose of preventing any Europeans from entering the province; and also, eventually, to extirpate all foreigners from China!

I have seen a copy of their private circular, in which, of course, the religion of the LORD JESUS comes in for a share of violent slander. The Imperial proclamation allowing all foreigners to travel in the Interior, and commanding the officials to protect them, has nowhere been posted in HU-NAN."

SI-CH'UEN, instead of HU-NAN, became his homeward route. Ch'ung-k'ing, the important commercial capital of the province, was reached in the middle of March (1877); and his heart was saddened to find no Protestant missionary amongst its teeming population, although Roman Catholics were there, as at Kwei-yang, in full force

The journey down the mighty Yang-tsi to I-ch'ang was not without its dangers. Overtaken and captured by pirates not far from Ch'ung-k'ing, the missionary and his Christian native companion were kept for some hours, expecting at any moment a violent death; and only the gracious providence of GOD ultimately delivered them. Upon arriving at I-ch'ang they went ashore, to visit, as they hoped, Messrs. Cameron and Nicoll in their new station; but what was the surprise with which they found the brethren gone, and their house in ruins—fruit of the I-ch'ang riot! Continuing his journey, Mr. Judd arrived at home, in Hankow, at the end of March

Three months later the lonely worker left single-handed in distant Kwei-yang was cheered by reinforcements, when Messrs. George Clarke, Edward Fishe, and Landale came to share his solitary quarters and great work. Around them lay the whole far-

reaching province, seventy-two walled cities, governing thousands of smaller towns and villages, and all without one single witness for GOD—surely a plenteous harvest, and labourers but few!

Yet there were other needs that seemed, if possible, more urgent. And when the brethren looked away beyond the southern boundary of KWEI-CHAU to vast KWANG-SI in all its darkness—larger even, and more populous than their own province, but without one single missionary—what could they say except, "Here am I; send me"? Within a week of their arrival Messrs. Clarke and Fishe again prepared to go forward, now into KWANG-SI, leaving Messrs. Landale and Broumton to their lonely labours at Kwei-yang.

Little information could the brethren obtain, either as to the best route, or the kind of reception they might expect across the border. They knew that the province in which they proposed to itinerate was almost as large as England and Scotland; contained a population of five million people, proverbially hostile to foreigners; and that Roman Catholic attempts to effect an entrance had been successfully resisted. They were told that to try and sell books in that region was useless, or to seek to influence the people in any way for good. "Nevertheless," wrote Mr. Clarke, "we started, trusting in GOD."

Twelve days' rough travelling across the Nan-ling mountains brought them to the border of KWANG-SI, in the middle of July. At Kin-yuen, the first city met with, they had to cross the river in sight of a

considerable crowd. Sending the others forward, Mr. Clarke took a handful of books and began to speak to the people, hoping to keep them in good humour. After talking awhile he offered the tracts and Scriptures, wondering whether they would be bought. To his surprise the people purchased them eagerly. A second supply, and a third, were soon disposed of; and when Mr. Fishe returned to the ferry-boat for more, the people crowded on board, and began to pull the whole stock out of the boxes in their eagerness to obtain them. Such was the demand, that the brethren found it difficult to withdraw with any of their books left unsold; and this in a province of which it had been reported that the people would not buy!

For more than six weeks the evangelists travelled on unhindered, passing many important places, and everywhere finding the same readiness to purchase books. Had they made any attempt to settle, opposition would probably have arisen; but as it was, they were not interfered with.

"*The people would have books*," wrote Mr. George Clarke, "and this eagerness to buy was general. Often we passed through places where markets were being held; and numbers of those present after listening to our preaching carried the books away with them to their mountain homes. Hundreds must have thus been scattered beyond the places we ourselves were able to visit."

The pioneers were warmly welcomed on their return to Kwei-yang by Messrs. Broumton and Landale,

and a change for all four was arranged, the latter deciding to take a short tour, leaving the only two bedrooms of their little house to the newly arrived travellers. The weather was hot, and both the brethren were suffering slightly from fever; but nothing serious was apprehended, and Messrs. Broumton and Landale left them with no thought of danger. They had not long been absent, however, when a messenger hurriedly recalled them to Kwei-yang, and they arrived to find Mr. George Clarke in high fever on one side of the house, while in the opposite room his companion lay unconscious, dying of the same complaint. Through the long hours of one memorable night they watched by his side, doing what little was possible to soothe and help him; but early on the morning of the following day (September 6th, 1877) Edward Fishe fell asleep in JESUS.

Far away at Wu-ch'ang his newly-made widow and orphans little guessed the loss that had befallen them. After one more missionary journey in the province that had been laid upon his heart and remembered for years in earnest prayer, he had hoped to return for these loved ones, and bring them to his new sphere in the far interior. But GOD had other plans for him. His work on earth was done.

"Truly it is well with him," wrote Mr. Hudson Taylor; "but who is ready to take up the fallen mantle, to go forth in his footsteps, and be GOD'S witness among the perishing millions of KWANG-SI?

Who is ready to leave all and follow JESUS, saying as to earth's comfort, ease, or rest—"Not now, for 'here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.'"

"Surely some one is ready to raise the fallen banner, and go forth gladly to the front ranks of the battle, where the conqueror's crown may, perhaps, be soonest won?

"One phrase is often used in speaking of those who are taken to the rest above. 'Our loss,' we say, 'is their gain.' In a sense, of course, this is true. But would it not be even more true to say,—'this gain, which is theirs, is our gain too'?

"We are finite both in wisdom and resources, and often can only give to one of two whom we desire to help; or must divide our gift, making it less for each. Not so our Father. He does not rob one that He may enrich another; but always does the best for each, the best for all. He does the best for the widow and the orphan; the best for each sorrowing survivor, as well as the best for him who enters on the joys eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; the best for the one whose tears still flow, just as truly as for the other whose tears are for ever wiped away."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. McCARTHY'S WALK ACROSS CHINA.

DURING all the months of the year 1877, through which we have been following the first missionaries of the Gospel to the provinces of KWEI-CHAU and KWANG-SI, another pioneer evangelist has steadily pursued his way through hitherto untravelled regions, completing a solitary journey of seven months' duration and three thousand miles in length, from the eastern shore-line of China to its most distant west.

Mr. John McCarthy was the first non-official traveller to cross China, and the earliest evangelist to herald the glad tidings of the Gospel throughout a large part of three provinces. For many years it had been his earnest desire to attempt the journey he was thus finally enabled to accomplish, and practically to solve the much-debated question as to whether the far interior was open to the evangelist or not. While labouring in the provinces of CHEH-KIANG and KIANG-SU, bordering on the Yellow Sea, or further inland upon the banks of the great Yang-tsi in populous GAN-HWUY, his thoughts had often travelled

westward toward the regions as yet uncntered by any witness for CHRIST. But the way had never opened for such a journey. The mere suggestion aroused ridicule.

"Walk across China? What madness!" said the critics. "Impossible; it never could be done!"

And so the heart's desire was only spoken of to GOD; while year after year the prayer went up that He would bring it to pass in due season.

In the autumn of 1875, when, after a few weeks' stay in England, Mr. McCarthy returned with two of the eighteen brethren for the Interior, his hope seemed as distant as ever. It was arranged that when the brethren knew the language sufficiently to permit of their going forward, Mr. McCarthy should be their escort inland. But when the time came, and six of the young men were ready to start, Mr. Taylor's absence and other circumstances rendered his presence necessary at the coast. What was to be done? After prayerful consideration the brethren felt that, looking to the LORD for help and guidance, they ought to go forward alone, believing that He would make up for an absence which was clearly of His ordering.

Immediately on the signing of the Chefoo Convention they started, as we have already seen, two for SHAN-SI, two for SHEN-SI, and two for distant KAN-SUH, travelling far and wide throughout those important regions, meeting with many difficulties, as well as much to encourage, and returning again, and

yet again, to the work. GOD blessed their efforts, for inexperience and weakness need be no hindrance to Him, and ultimately used them to open permanent stations in each of these provinces.

Thus the special work for which Mr. McCarthy seemed to have been brought back to China was accomplished without him; and he could not but wonder for what purpose his return had been permitted just then. But before many months had passed the matter was made plain. For resting in the LORD, and waiting patiently for Him, is a very sure way of arriving at the solution of all life's mysteries—the greatest as well as the least. Mr. Hudson Taylor's arrival in Shanghai at the end of the year liberated Mr. McCarthy from duties at the coast, and some of the brethren he had sent off upon their journeys had scarcely time to reach their destinations in the north before he himself was free to start westward—to seek, as the LORD might open the way, the accomplishment of the undertaking that had so long been laid upon his heart.

Not only were hindrances removed; needed help was also provided in the person of a very suitable native Christian, who gladly volunteered to accompany Mr. McCarthy. Although his unexpected offer was the very thing to be desired, the missionary thought well to warn him of the difficulties and dangers that would necessarily be encountered should they penetrate as far as western YUN-NAN, in crossing which Margary had been murdered.

"If Mr. McCarthy, a stranger from a foreign land, does not fear," replied the young man, "if he feels it laid upon his heart to carry the Gospel to western China, at the risk of his life, certainly I, Ts'uen-ling, a native of the country, and also a believer in the one true GOD, must have equal faith."

So it was settled. And Mr. McCarthy still delights to recall the Chinaman's invaluable aid, without which that journey never could have been accomplished.

The close of January 1877, found them *en route*, *viâ* Hankow, for I-ch'ang—a large and busy city nine hundred miles from the coast, newly opened as a free port, at which the English consul and custom-house officials had quite recently arrived. Previously our brethren Cameron and Nicoll had been the only foreigners living in I-ch'ang. Now, however, in consequence of official negotiations for the purchase of land, etc., trouble seemed to be brewing. This culminated in a serious riot on March 3rd, a few days after Mr. McCarthy's arrival. All foreigners were obliged to leave the city for the time being; and it was not until June that Mr. Cameron, after living for some weeks on a little boat near at hand, was allowed to return.

Meanwhile Mr. McCarthy had continued his journey westward, following the great Yang-tsi as it enters a few miles above I-ch'ang, the first of the celebrated gorges whose wild and solemn beauty well-nigh defies description. Following its westward course, the travellers painfully ascended the long succession of its

SCENE ON THE YANG-TSI.

rapids to the border of SI-CH'UEN. With feelings of the deepest interest they approached this magnificent western province, rich, fertile, and beautiful, covering an area more than equal to three Englands, and containing a population of at least twenty millions. Roman Catholics had long been established in this region, but at the time of Mr. McCarthy's visit there was not a single Protestant missionary anywhere to be found in SI-CH'UEN.

One early April morning, Wan-hien came in sight, finely situated on a hillside near the river. Shipping lay crowded along the shore, and everything combined

to indicate a busy commercial centre, with all the concomitant evils usually found in Chinese ports. Here the travellers left the river, and commenced their long overland march across three provinces, into Upper Burmah.

The first stage of five-and-twenty days between Wan-hien and Ch'ung-k'ing was full of interest, the road lying through a populous and fertile district, whose inhabitants welcomed the strangers.

"This part of SI-CH'UEN," the journal runs, "is densely populated, the numerous towns and large villages being often little more than a mile apart. The people seem very industrious, hardly a spot of uncultivated land can be found. The fine hills are, as a rule, completely covered with vegetation up to their summits; wheat, beans, peas, rape, rice, and opium being the principal crops. We met large numbers of heavily burdened coolies going towards Wan-hien, carrying coal and paper, as well as rice and vegetables; while those travelling in the opposite direction were laden with cotton, salt, iron, and sulphur amongst other things. Trade seems to be brisk; and although so much traversed, the roads are good, and kept in tolerable repair."

The friendliness of the people was most cheering. In one lovely country district, not far from Kwang-gan, the *City of Broad Peace*, the evangelists were entertained at the house of a young man previously met in Gan-k'ing, hundreds of miles away. For about a fortnight they were domiciled amongst his hospitable clan; invited from house to house, and village to village, greatly enjoying the little season

of rest and quiet thus afforded after the strain of continually travelling among busy, crowded cities, walking and talking from morning till night, and putting up with the discomfort of Chinese wayside inns.

It was an excellent opening. The people seemed really glad to hear, asked frequent questions, and listened long and attentively. Curiosity was rife as to life in foreign lands—steamboats, trains, telegraphic communication, etc.

"Does it ever rain in your honourable country?" they would gravely inquire; "and does rain come down as it does in China?"

"Have you any mountains and valleys, so far away?"

"Does the sun shine on you as on us? and is it the same sun?"

Kind and patient answers to these trivial questions removed misapprehension, and gained confidence, winning an entrance for the Master's message to darkened minds and hearts.

"In that one district of SI-CH'UEN," wrote Mr. McCarthy, "in a circle with a diameter of only about forty miles, I might easily have spent four to six months had time allowed, simply in going about from one place to another, as I received invitations. Many were the pressing calls I was obliged to refuse; and in none of the houses to which I went would the people take anything from me. They did not want my money. They received me freely as a friend, and in every case were glad to have the books

A VILLAGE IN SI-CH'UEN.

and tracts left with them, and to hear the Gospel from my lips."

Two or three days' journey from the pleasant district of *Broad Peace* brought the travellers to Shun-k'ing, where again they met with friendly entertainment. Thence by a rice junk they reached Ch'ung-k'ing, the great metropolis of the west. Ten May days were spent in this important city. Impressed by its size, the density of its population, and its exceeding need, Mr. McCarthy took a house here, which was occupied later on by our brethren Cameron and Nicoll.

Prevented going westward from Ch'ung-k'ing,

Mr. McCarthy and Ts'uen-ling took the southern route to Kwei-yang. They travelled very simply, walking all the way, their little luggage carried by a coolie, engaged to follow them anywhere. All difficulty about hiring chairs or bearers, horses or mules thus obviated, it was comparatively easy to pass quickly on without bustle or excitement.

Mr. McCarthy's previous experience of Chinese travelling, had taught him that, very commonly, discomfort arises from the fact that the hungry, tired-out wayfarer, after his long day's journey, finds it difficult patiently to endure the presence of "the curious, gaping, though often appreciative crowd, that naturally gathers about him to see the animal feed." He therefore chose the wise expedient of always remaining at the first lodging house reached at their destination, irrespective of the accommodation offered. By this means he and his companions were generally able to get a cup of tea and make some sort of meal before many visitors arrived. Somewhat refreshed, they could then welcome the crowd as they came, and give themselves to seeking the benefit of the people in intercourse which invariably proved pleasant.

Five days south of Ch'ung-k'ing the border of KWEI-CHAU was crossed. The country here grew wild and mountainous, all the available land in many places seemed to be under cultivation for opium, and the people were exceedingly poor and miserable. Spending a night at the first prefectural city on the road, they fell in with a SI-CH'UEN mandarin.

"He was only fifty-eight years of age," wrote Mr. McCarthy, "but was withered and decrepit from the lavish use of opium. Several times during the day I had noticed his sedan-chair left empty in the street, while he was somewhere indoors gratifying his depraved appetite. As we conversed together on the evils of opium-smoking, amongst other things, he was most emphatic in his condemnation of the practice, and in his expressions of astonishment that Englishmen should have any complicity in such a trade. I told him, of course, that if all Englishmen, and Chinamen too, for that matter, really believed in CHRIST JESUS, they would neither grow, nor sell, nor use the drug for any except medicinal purposes. He smiled very faintly at the possibility of a consummation so remote, considering, as he said, that 'now every other man smokes'! Soon afterwards he withdrew to transact some 'important matters,' which my most pressing requests could not induce him to defer. A few minutes later this distinguished personage, 'the father and mother of the people,' might have been seen lying, like any of his coolies, enjoying the opium pipe, regardless of Viceroy, Emperor, and all the world beside."

Everywhere the travellers were painfully impressed with the results of this vice.

"In the prefecture of Tsen-i nothing but the poppy seemed grown. There were said to be opium smokers in every house of every town and village I passed through. This may not have been literally true, but the quantity consumed must be enormous, and the number of smokers fully five or six-tenths of the population. Even lads and girls seem to have acquired the habit."

Sixteen days from Ch'ung-k'ing brought the

travellers to Kwei-yang early in June. A soldier whom they had overtaken *en route* led them to the district in which Messrs. Broumton and Landale were living; and passing down the street they soon caught sight of the welcome characters that announced the little mission house, reached at last.

Rested and refreshed by a pleasant visit, they started again for Yun-nan Fu, the capital of the neighbouring province. Little more than two years had elapsed since the murder of Mr. Margary at Man-wyne; and although the Chefoo Convention had been signed since then, and proclamations issued in favour of foreigners travelling inland throughout the Empire, it still seemed quite a question as to how an Englishman, unprotected and alone, might be received in the regions that had witnessed that dark deed. The needs of YUN-NAN, however, burdened the missionary's heart; and, feeling that practical experiment as to the possibility of evangelising its people must be made, Mr. McCarthy prayerfully decided to penetrate, at any rate, to the capital.

Through a somewhat desolate and barren country they made their way to Gan-shun, the next prefectural city, about halfway to the YUN-NAN border—a busy, populous, and important centre, whose far-reaching traffic attracts thousands to its crowded monthly fairs. Numbers of men from the southern sea-board provinces ply a flourishing trade in opium between this place and Canton, travelling in large companies, sometimes as many as two thousand together, armed

for the road, each carrying a long spear—a decidedly formidable band. The authorities, at the time of Mr. McCarthy's visit, were endeavouring to put a stop to this dangerous condition of affairs.

The long summer days of July saw the travellers well across the border into the province of YUN-NAN, in which no Protestant missionary had ever before been seen. At the gate of the capital, a good-sized city with a very populous southern district, they were stopped, and the nature of their business demanded. Ts'uen-ling explained, giving tracts to the officials, who soon allowed them to go peaceably on their way. Judging it wiser not to attempt street preaching, which might have courted opposition, the evangelists spent a few days working quietly amongst the people, and gathering information as to the possibilities of going further west. Still finding no hindrance, they were encouraged to go on, right across the heart of the province to Ta-li Fu. It was wonderful how the LORD preserved and prospered them from day to day.

"It was not that we were able to *overcome* difficulties," wrote Mr. McCarthy, "or remove obstacles caused by mandarins and others trying to oppose our progress; such difficulties simply did not exist. We quietly pursued our way with all the other travellers along the road; having constant intercourse with officials journeying to their various appointments, with traders occupied in business affairs, and with large numbers of the poorer people. We associated, in fact, with all sorts and conditions of men; and with but two exceptions, never received a cross word from any one

the whole journey through. It was noteworthy that the only two who seemed the least disposed to be unfriendly were men who came from the coast. One was from Chin-kiang, a free port on the Yang-tsi, in which I had myself lived for years; and the other was from Wu-ch'ang, opposite the foreign settlement at Hankow. The disrespect they showed us did not amount to much. When Ts'uen-ling offered them a book, with some pleasant remark, one of them answered roughly,—

"'Why do you go about the country like this selling the foreign devil's literature? Do you think we have no books of our own? Have you never seen the writings of Confucius?'

"'Well, if you don't care for the book, there is no need to have it!' replied the young man, and the trouble blew over.

"For the rest of that day the speaker would have nothing to do with us; but on the morrow, as we were resting by the wayside, I invited him to take a cup of tea with me. The Chinaman in him could not resist the tea, and we soon became fast friends; which happier state of affairs continued to the end of the journey and our arrival at Ta-li Fu.

"The Chefoo Convention had already effected great good in YUN-NAN. We found it quite a recognised fact amongst the common people as well as with the authorities, that foreigners have a right to travel in the country. And not merely is it recognised that they have a right to do so; it is also expected that they will. Nobody seemed surprised to see me; the only surprise being that foreign officials had not yet been appointed to reside either in the capital or at Ta-li Fu. I found it quite a popular idea that an English consul was soon to be sent to the latter city *to open a foreign store.*"

The country people here were still deplorably poor

and degraded. The women largely toil at heavy manual labour, elsewhere considered only fit for men; and the people suffer greatly from a tendency to *goitre*, the women, especially, having them of immense size. In some towns through which the travellers passed, fully half the population seemed to be affected by this trying complaint. Fever and ague were also very common, and the sufferers were exceedingly grateful for the medical aid Mr. McCarthy was able to give.

From Ta-li Fu the travellers made west for the Burman frontier, through mountainous regions, the roads growing rougher, and travelling more difficult. The upper waters of the Cambodia were crossed at the foot of a range of far-reaching hills, beyond which lay busy Yung-ch'ang in its sheltered, fertile valley.

Scarcely one week's journey from this place stands the frontier town of Man-wyne, at which Margary had fallen; and the way being still quite open, Mr. McCarthy decided to walk on to that point, hoping to cross into Burmah, should the LORD permit. The only stopping place of importance on the road is the city of Momien, in a broad and comparatively well-peopled valley, high up among the mountains. Here the travellers spent a few days preaching the Gospel, and making friends, interested to find that the fame of the Bhamô Medical Mission had spread even to that distance across the borderland.

Arrived at Man-wyne, Mr. McCarthy's first care

was to circulate a number of books and tracts to show that he had come on no political errand, but simply as a travelling "teacher." At nightfall the military mandarin sent round to inquire whether he had come on "public matters."

"I returned the messenger with my card," wrote Mr. McCarthy, "saying that I was only a private individual, a religious teacher who had come from the capital; and that being so near the frontier it was my intention to cross over to Bhamô, to see some friends living there who were engaged in similar work.

"He replied that he supposed my friends must be Dr. Harvey and those associated with him; and assured me that he had personally a warm regard for them, having met them frequently while in Burmah. Also that, being their friend, he was the more anxious to take good care of me; and therefore wished me to understand that as long as I remained in Man-wyne he would be responsible for my safety; adding that I ought not to attempt to cross the hills without getting one of the chieftains to go security for my safe conduct to Bhamô.

"Travelling simply as you are, you need apprehend no difficulty, except from the wild tribes on the Kah-chen hills," had been the warning frequently received by the missionary. For the good behaviour of the mountain-men no one could be responsible. Certainly, armed with their long knives and spears, they looked wild and fierce enough. Feeling sure, however, that the LORD, who had led them thus far in safety, would not fail to protect and guide them still, our travellers were not to be deterred from their

purpose, and having engaged a mountain-chief as guide, they set forth.

For two or three days their route lay among the Kah-chen hills, whose people everywhere received them with great kindness, volunteering the very best of their provision and house-room, and hospitably conducting them from point to point in perfect safety. Nothing could have exceeded their friendliness; and Mr. McCarthy, whose heart was much drawn out towards them, anticipating only a brief stay in Burmah, agreed to visit them again on his return.

On a warm summer evening at the end of August he at last reached Bhamô, and made his way up to the mission-station. Messrs. Soltau and Adams in that lonely situation, so far from intercourse with the outside world, could hardly believe it possible that a foreigner had arrived.

"Who can it be?" they asked, bewildered, "and where has he come from?"

The answer to these questions—that it was none other than John McCarthy, and that he had come all the way from Shanghai, three thousand miles overland right across China—scarcely made the wonder seem less. And it was some time before, in their joy and surprise, they could believe it true. Little by little the story was told, as the weary travellers rested from their long journey, and together they praised GOD, Whose hand had indeed been with them for good.

Remarkably enough, the first formidable hindrance put in Mr. McCarthy's way was from the Indian Government, and took the form of a letter addressed to him by the British agent resident at Bhamô. For seven months he had travelled unhindered through province after province, visiting cities, towns, and villages almost innumerable; and now in Burmah he found his first difficulty—not from the Chinese, not from the Shans, not from the wild tribes of the Kah-chen hills, all of whom treated him with invariable kindness and respect, but from our own authorities! The message sent him was to the effect that the Government could not consent to his returning to China *viâ* YUN-NAN, considering that route unsafe for foreigners.

This prohibition, although unexpected, and naturally anything but welcome, was not allowed to trouble his heart.

"I believed that it was GOD who had brought me safely through China," wrote Mr. McCarthy; "and if GOD had wanted me to return that way, neither the Viceroy of India, nor any other power, could have prevented it. I took the message as from HIM, and so could not trouble about it."

Well is it to be so utterly at rest in GOD as the one great Circumstance of life with which we have to deal, as to be satisfied with whatever He may either send or permit—having no will apart from His, which is always wisest, always best!

After spending six months helping the brethren at

Bhamô, Mr. McCarthy paid a second visit to England before returning to China by sea.

Thus was accomplished the first great missionary journey right across China; linking Shanghai and Hankow, on the Yang-tsi, with unevangelised SI-CHUEN, far-off KWEI-CHAU desolated by war and opium, and the cities of YUN-NAN itself, never previously visited with the Gospel; and connecting these again with the dangerous borderland of the Burman frontier, with the Kah-chen hills, and the upper waters of the Irrawaddy. Thus was proved the accessibility of the people of these regions, and their willingness to receive the Gospel message, never before brought within their reach.

Some one had gone and tried it.

Some one had been able, by the blessing of GOD, to pass quietly through these populous inland provinces, generally supposed to be too distant, too dangerous, or in any other ways unsuitable for the residence of foreign missionaries.

Some one whose eyes had seen, and whose heart had felt the unspeakably great and awful need of the millions of western China, had gone home again to England. There was a voice now to plead with new authority the long-neglected cause of her lost tribes and races; the unutterable degradation of her oppressed and suffering womanhood; the opium-cursed, sin-bound condition of her vast regions, unblessed by any knowledge of the light and liberty of the children of GOD.

And these needs and possibilities were pleaded, faithfully, earnestly, until the Church of CHRIST began to realise that western China was no longer shut off from our efforts, as by a closed door, but was open, accessible, waiting for our tardy coming as witnesses of JESUS.

Not western China only, however, was the richer for this journey. Deeply burnt in upon the traveller's heart had been the needs of the weary, toiling, suffering women he had seen—especially in YUNNAN. For them he had been able to do nothing; for them no one ever could do anything, until sisters from more favoured lands should come, filled with the love of JESUS to bring them blessing. For these women a new plea was raised, and for the heathen womanhood of China—a plea that found an echo in many a Christian woman's heart. And scores of missionary sisters toiling to-day in the far-off inland provinces of this mighty Empire, rejoicing it may be in seeing fruit of their labours in the transformed lives it has been theirs "to love into loveliness," bless GOD with grateful hearts for that long-ago journey, and for the incentive it became in the traveller's life, at any rate, to do all that one man could to help forward the great work of bringing CHRIST to the women of China.

CHAPTER XIX.

THROUGH THE FAMINE IN SHAN-SI.

1877—1879.

WHEN Mr. McCarthy came up the Yang-tsi going west, he passed at Wu-chang Messrs. Turner and James, who had just concluded their first journey to SHAN-SI, and were preparing for a second visit. One week later * they too set out, *viâ* the Han. Shipwreck and pirates were encountered on the river, but Fan-ch'eng was safely reached early in March. Then came the trying cart-stage through HO-NAN ; and spring had fairly set in when, crossing the Yellow River, they re-entered the province "West of the Mountains." Only a few months previously they had left it in the depth of winter. But now—

"The hills were covered with early wheat, the P'u-chau plain was radiant with the blossom of pear and persimmon trees, while the ground seemed carpeted with a robe of green, bedecked with violets and other familiar flowers."

Beauty and freshness, however, were sadly limited. The district immediately bordering the Yellow River was pleasant enough, but the remaining three hundred

* February 10th, 1877.

miles of their route to the capital lay through a desolate, famine-stricken region, similar to the parts of HO-NAN already crossed. The sufferings of the people were fearful.

"There has been no rain in these districts for two or three years," wrote Mr. Turner. "The grass has disappeared; the loose sandy soil is dried to powder, and carried by the wind in clouds. The cities are poor, the villages dilapidated, the fields barren, the people dirty and starving. In some places many have already died of starvation. The beggars are dreadful; they go about in crowds, consisting principally of women and children. They surround the passer-by, and kneel down, crying for a few cash, but not in the way one hears elsewhere in China; the plea is that of really starving people in dreadful earnest for a morsel of food! . . . At most places where we stopped for refreshment we had a large crowd of them round us watching each mouthful, and holding out their empty basins in mute appeal!"

Passing through P'ing-yang Fu and fifteen other cities, they arrived for the first time at T'ai-yuen, the provincial capital, standing on its far-reaching plain, beautifully surrounded to north, east, and west by hills. The city is large and influential, though not particularly busy or populous—its wall, said to be thirteen miles in circumference, enclosing a good deal of ground still under cultivation. A fine Roman Catholic cathedral occupies a good position just inside the north gate, and no fewer than six foreign priests were resident, under the supervision of an Italian bishop, well advanced in years. Many of the

heathen temples were large and imposing, their brightly coloured, blue and yellow roof-tiles adding much to the picturesque effect of their elaborate construction.

Engaging a native teacher, the brethren decided to give the next two months to evangelising the plain extending south of the capital, for almost ninety miles, to the prefecture of Fen-chau Fu. Well-watered, and populous, this important district contains no fewer than twelve walled cities governing the surrounding towns and villages. In many of these they preached the Gospel, and sold their Scriptures and tracts with considerable freedom; and as the object of their presence gradually became understood they were kindly received. But their hearts were often saddened as the weeks passed on—spring giving place to summer, and the long, hot days merging again into autumn—and still the sufferings of the famine-stricken people continued unabated. Month after month went by, and the pitiless heavens above were just as clear and blue as they had been for three long, dreadful years! No sign of rain was anywhere to be seen; and the prayers of the people in their extremity still remained unanswered.

"Night and day," wrote Mr. Turner, "incessant prayer was made for rain, the people crying aloud to their gods for that which alone could save them from death. Passing along the roads, we heard them groan out their petitions to Heaven; but Heaven only seemed to mock at their calamity. Much of the grain that was sown never sprung up, and

that which did appear above the surface was soon withered by the scorching sun. During the heat of summer, famine fever worked sad havoc amongst the starving; and by autumn the distress became so great that whole families committed suicide rather than face the hardships of approaching winter."

Both the evangelists suffered severely from famine fever, and it seemed as though Mr. James would not have strength to rally. He evidently could not stand the continued strain of the circumstances that surrounded them. Being unable to travel alone, Mr. Turner was obliged to accompany him to the coast, although exceedingly reluctant to leave the province once again without any Protestant missionary, and that while the people were perishing by hundreds every day.

Six hundred and fifty miles' cart-journey followed, to Fan-ch'eng; a terrible experience—one traveller sick, and both daily heart-wrung by the awful suffering that surrounded them on every hand.

"The scenes witnessed upon this journey," wrote Mr. Turner, from Hankow,* "have left an indelible impression of horror on my mind. It is difficult to conceive of a country in a worse condition. Trade has ceased; for those who have money dare not part with it, except for the bare necessaries of life. Many of the cities are crowded with a ragged, homeless herd of starving people. The great road, so busy in the spring, is nearly deserted. The fields are barren. There is no grass, and no early wheat above the surface; for the people are dispirited. Their crops

* Reached January 1878.

have failed so often that those who have grain are afraid to put it into the ground. Many of the trees are destitute of bark, long since stripped off and eaten. The poor are literally starving.

"We see men once strong and well clothed staggering along the frozen ground with only a few rags to shield them from the piercing wind, their feeble steps, emaciated bodies, and wild looks telling only too plainly that they were about to spend their last night upon earth. In the early morning, as we passed, we saw the victims of the preceding night lying dead and stiff where they fell. On that open road men were writhing in the agonies of death. No one pitied them; no one cared for them, for the sight of death had long since become common. Hundreds of corpses were lying on the roads. We saw them. Some had only just fallen; others had been there longer, and were stripped of their poor rags. Hungry dogs were prowling about, only waiting for one bolder than the rest to commence the attack. Many of the corpses were fearful to behold. . . . Men, women, and children alike, were among the victims. Outside some cities were heaps of skulls, bones, and pieces of human flesh; and very often, away on the open country, we saw a number of corpses lying together, evidently the remains of wanderers, who, exhausted by their weary search after food, had huddled together to die. Families have been broken up, the wives sold, the children sold, or cast out upon the mountain side to perish, while the men have wandered about in the vain search for food. The whole district through which we passed was thus suffering, and is still in the same condition. Towns, busy and well-to-do in the spring, were half deserted; and no wonder, when from twenty to thirty persons died there every day.

"Much is being done by the Chinese officials to relieve the distress; but the facts above stated show how inadequate their efforts are to meet the overwhelming need."

In the end of November 1877, only two days after Messrs. James and Turner had left T'ai-yuen, the Rev. T. Richard of the Baptist Mission arrived with money for distribution among the famine sufferers. He had already been engaged in the neighbouring province of SHAN-TUNG in distributing the large sums contributed to the Shanghai and T'ien-tsin Relief Committees; but hearing of the worse distress in SHAN-SI he nobly resolved to go on there alone, and do what one man could to meet the awful crisis. Much sympathy was awakened at home by accounts continually appearing. The English Consul at T'ien-tsin wrote:—

"In November the aspect of affairs was simply terrible. The autumn crop over the whole of SHAN-SI, and the greater portion of CHIH-LI, HO-NAN, and SHEN-SI had failed. No rain had fallen, and the heavens were pitilessly blue. T'ien-tsin was inundated with supplies from every available port . . . and the cumbersome machinery of the Chinese Government was strained to its utmost to meet the enormous peril which stared it in the face. . . . In January 1878, T'seng, the Governor of SHAN-SI, an able and benevolent man, informed the Emperor that a thousand people were dying daily, and that six millions must be at once relieved."

Before the summer of 1878 it was soberly computed that fully five millions of people must already have perished in that awful visitation—a number equal to the whole population of London, or of Scotland.

The Famine Relief Fund, inaugurated in England under the Presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury,

remitted to China a sum of over £30,000, and the Missionary Societies £11,000 more, of which the larger half was contributed through the agency of the China Inland Mission.

Many of the famine relief gifts were noble, but the most generous donors were those who gave their all—life itself. While the distress was still at its worst, typhus fever broke out in the stricken districts, and carried off thousands who until then had survived. The members of the various missions engaged in relief work were exposed to the contagion, and the first to fall was the Rev. A. Whiting, of an American Society.

The Rev. David Hill, of the Wesleyan Mission, Hankow, had been commissioned with relief funds, and joined by our brother Turner and Mr. Whiting had proceeded to T'ien-tsin, and thence, overland, to the capital of SHAN-SI. The officials thankfully welcomed the additional help thus afforded, and work began at once; but, before three weeks had elapsed, Mr. Whiting was taken ill with famine fever, and on April 25th, 1878, he was called away to higher service—first of the devoted band who for CHRIST'S sake have not counted their lives dear unto them, and who sleep in missionary graves in far-off SHAN-SI.

In the summer of that year a very favourable reception met Messrs. Hill and Turner in P'ing-yang Fu, part of a large temple being prepared for their use. The Prefect and officials promptly returned their visits, and entered heartily into their plans. The people also welcomed them; and as the worst stress of need

began to pass away, they could not but feel what a grand sphere the neighbourhood presented for Gospel efforts. Books and tracts that Messrs. James and Turner had scattered on their previous visits had aroused inquiry in the minds of some, amongst whom was one man, who came to Mr. Hill saying that they did not clearly understand the doctrine, and wanted a teacher to remain and instruct them.

'When will the day dawn," wrote Mr. Turner, "that shall see bands of native Christians scattered amongst the cities of this province, shedding light upon the millions now in heathen darkness? T'ai-yuen and P'ing-yang both seem to be opening. Pray that we may be fitted to enter in as soon as GOD shall set before us doors of access; and that more labourers may speedily be thrust forth into this harvest."

Desires how abundantly fulfilled in the subsequent history of the work!*

In the end of July Mr. Turner joined Mr. Richard in his relief work at the capital; and when, in the early autumn, the latter left for SHAN-TUNG, Mr. Turner at T'ai-yuen, and Mr. Hill at P'ing-yang, found themselves single-handed—the only Protestant missionaries in the whole of distressed SHAN-SI.

Both were very busy; and Mr. Turner found that it was all he could do to keep up the extensive and important operations left by his able predecessor. For a few days all went well, but soon a distressing

* For later developments in this province see chapters on Dr. Schofield, and Cambridge Band.

attack of dysentery threatened to incapacitate him. There was no one else to carry relief to the famine-stricken sufferers, and *their* needs seemed the most urgent; so as long as it was at all possible the lonely worker struggled on. Some of the villages were a long way off, and to visit them necessitated rough riding over bad roads, drenched to the skin by heavy showers that were already beginning to fall. At last, however, the brave spirit had to yield. A brief note was sent by special runner to Mr. Hill at P'ing-yang, and then, too weak to think or act, unable to sleep, scarcely more than semi-conscious much of the time, the solitary sufferer resigned himself to rest, like a little child, in the certainty of the Father's love and care.

"I was indeed brought down to the grave," he wrote, "but JESUS was with me, and when I thought the end had come, I felt His arms sustaining me. So weary, and worn out with pain, I could not but rejoice to think that in an hour or two I should be with Him, to sin no more, and serve Him perfectly for ever!"

But GOD had other purposes in store, and relief was at hand. After two weary weeks Mr. Hill arrived from his distant station, having made a remarkably quick journey, and his care was blessed of GOD to his friend's restoration. At the same time,* although they had no certain knowledge of the fact, reinforce-

* See Chapter XXIV, "The First Women who went West."

ments were on their way from the south, drawing near to the great and needy province that was never again to be left with only two missionaries.

The influence acquired during those years of terrible distress was never lost. SHAN-SI was opened to the Gospel from end to end, and the result of the devoted labours of those early pioneers who did and suffered so much for its salvation, is still being reaped in blessing.

A stone tablet may be seen, to-day, in the city temple at P'ing-yang Fu, put up in honour of Messrs. Hill and Turner, whose faithful and unwearied service is still fragrant in the hearts of many who then learned to love and trust the LORD; and among the names of their colleagues none is more widely known in those regions than that of "*Li Ti-mo-t'ai*" (Mr. Timothy Richard), the first foreigner who brought relief to the famine sufferers of T'ai-yuen.

"The Chinese officials," wrote the English Consul, "now treat the missionaries with the most marked cordiality, and assist them in every way in their power. As for the people, they have at last opened their houses. The distributers, since last autumn, have seen more of real Chinese life than all other missionaries put together since China was opened to them. The advent of the foreigner in all the places visited is now hailed with delight, and the utmost courtesy and hospitality is extended to them, not only by those who taste their generosity, but by those who will never need it. This distribution of funds by the brave and judicious men engaged in the work will do more to open China to us than a dozen wars."

F. H. Balfour, Esq., an English official, also wrote:—

"The sight of so much self-sacrificing labour and Christ-like devotion as have been displayed by the missionaries throughout these troubles has filled Chinamen with astonishment. It has opened their eyes.

"'What,' they are reported to have said on one occasion, when thousands of them came flocking round the missionaries who had brought them such timely succour, 'are these the foreigners we have heard so much about—the malignant, unscrupulous, deceitful foreigners? Well, we will never speak ill of them again, nor believe what is told us against them. The Mandarins leave us to die of starvation, while the foreigners they have taught us to hate are spending their very lives in saving ours.'

"This is but a faint representation of the new-born good-will of the Chinese people to us; and it is well that their friendship and gratitude should be cemented by further deeds of mercy."

While recognising with gratitude to GOD the truth of these and many other testimonies to the value of the noble relief work done, one cannot but reflect with shame upon another side of England's intercourse with China. Our compassion for this great people in their need was comparatively brief and limited; while the fetters we had forced upon them —in the accursed opium traffic, which brings their wealth to our coffers, but stains our hands with their blood—then bound, and still bind them. A few thousands of English gold had been doled out to the starving multitudes of northern China when they

were dying by the thousand every day for want of a basin of rice gruel, or a piece of bread ; but what was that to the opium revenue which then was, and is still, ruining the nation, body and soul—a revenue that repaid us over and over again, more than twice on an average every week, for the whole sum of our generous gifts!

While we were doing something to help the famine sufferers, we were at the same time deliberately refusing to ratify the Chefoo Convention, which had been signed by our Ambassador on behalf of England fully two years before, simply because its last clause might have afforded the Chinese Government opportunity for restricting our opium trade in her southern ports! In spite of earnest protestations, that Convention remained unratified, in direct opposition to all principles of international honour, for nine long years, and even then was not finally concluded until the objectionable clause had been modified to our satisfaction. Truly a cry from China, "Be just before you are generous," might well have put England to shame!

But no such reproach escaped the lips of those who, in gratitude for the aid received, seemed almost to forget their great and cruel wrong. The Chinese Ambassador in London wrote to the *Times* that they regarded England's help as "an act of disinterested kindness, for which the people of China would ever remain her debtors." In a later letter to Lord Salisbury he wrote on behalf of his Government :—

"The noble philanthropy which heard, in a far-distant country, the cry of suffering, and hastened to its assistance, is too signal a recognition of the common brotherhood of humanity ever to be forgotten; and is all the more worthy to be remembered because it is not a passing response to a generous emotion, but a continued effort, persevered in until, in sending the welcome rain, Heaven gave the assuring promise of returning plenty, and the sign that brotherly succour was no longer required. Coming from Englishmen residing in all parts of the world, this spontaneous act of generosity made a deep impression on the Government and people of China, which cannot but have the effect of more closely cementing the friendly relations which now so happily exist between China and Great Britain. But the hands that gave also assumed the arduous duty of administering the relief; and here I would not forget to offer my grateful thanks and condolence to the families of those, and they are not a few, who nobly fell in distributing the fund."

A touching tribute, and one that well illustrates the ready response so often found amongst the Chinese to self-sacrificing devotion and CHRIST-like love.

Oh that the "noble philanthropy" of Englishmen all the world over, in these later days, might be stirred to its very depths by the cry of a more widespread suffering and more bitter woe than the worst horrors of the famine ever wrung from the heart of China—stirred to demand, in the name of that "common brotherhood of humanity," or rather in the higher Name of Him who sacrificed *all* that He might redeem China as well as England—the abolition of the national crime of our country that has brought

ruin and degradation into so many millions of Chinese homes—the cessation of the iniquitous Opium Traffic.

The province of SHAN-SI, in common with every other part of the Empire, has suffered the inevitable effects of the opium habit, in a marked and widespread deterioration of the character and commerce of its people.

"I asked my barber recently,"* wrote Mr. David Hill, when the worst of the famine was past, "whether there had been any theatrical performances in the city of late.

"'Certainly,' he replied.

"'Were they given by the officials?'

"'No, by the old clothes' stores. All branches of trade have their annual theatricals in T'ai-yuen Fu.'

"'Have you, the honourable barbers?'

"'Yes, in the sixth month.'

"'How many barbers are there in this city?'

"'More than three hundred. In the time of Hien-fung there were six hundred and more, but T'ai-yuen Fu has gone down sadly. Every branch of trade in SHAN-SI has suffered terribly during the last few years.'

"'Wars and rebellions, I suppose?'

"'No, not that. From such calamities we could have recovered. It is opium that has ruined us. In the days of Tao-kwang and Hien-fung trade flourished and everything prospered; but now the only trade that is paying as in the old times is the trade in opium.'

"'Do many in official classes smoke?'

"'Nearly all; in fact, you may reckon that in SHAN-SI the number of opium smokers averages seven out of every ten of all classes of society.'

"'But you don't smoke, do you?'

* June 20th, 1879, in T'ai-yuen Fu, SHAN-SI.

"'Ah, don't I! It costs me about three thousand cash a month.' (Equal to three dollars.)

"'And how long have you smoked?'

"'About ten years.'

"'Why, you must have spent a little fortune on opium?'

"'Yes; and the worst of it is I can't get cured of the habit. Our anti-opium pills are no use. They all contain more or less opium. And now, if I don't take the pipe three times a day this summer weather, I'm good for nothing, and can do no work. It is simply a hopeless case, much as I wish to be rid of it.'

"'Do any of your assistants smoke?'

"'Yes, there are five of us, and four smoke opium. The only one who does not is the young boy who helps in the shop. It is this that is bringing SHAN-SI to beggary.'

"All this was said without the least animosity towards the foreigners, but in the bitterness of the man's soul. Getting on towards fifty years of age, he felt himself a slave, an unwilling, wretched slave, to a habit he hated, despised, and cursed."

It is interesting to notice in connection with the subsequent development of missionary effort in this province, the leading position of usefulness occupied by opium refuges, which have been widely established, and have proved an invaluable aid in bringing the people under the influence of the Gospel.

CHAPTER XX.

AMONG ETERNAL SNOWS

AUGUST 1877—JANUARY 1878.

AMONGST the eighteen brethren given for inland China in answer to the prayer of 1875, James Cameron * is remarkable as having itinerated more widely than any other European in the great Empire of the East. His lifework was essentially that of a pioneer. Of giant frame, and unfailing Scotch endurance; of simple habits, strong faith, and deep spirituality, he possessed a good equipment for the task that carried him through every province in China proper, except HU-NAN. Like many another of our early workers, he has gone to his rest and reward.

James Cameron's first work in China was in the eastern provinces. During his second year he was stationed with Mr. Nicoll, at I-ch'ang. Even then his itinerant aptitude found scope. Unable to do

* Mr. Cameron and Mr. George Nicoll came out together from the Missionary Training Institute at Harley House, in East London, and, accompanied by Mr. G. W. Clarke, landed in Shanghai on September 30th, 1875, nine years to a day after the arrival of the *Lammermuir* party.

otherwise than attempt to reach as many as possible, he visited all the leading towns and villages between his station and the western boundary of HU-PEH. After the I-ch'ang riot Messrs. Cameron and Nicoll went forward to Ch'ung-k'ing in SI-C'HUEN—the first Protestant missionaries to reside within the borders of that large and important province. From this basis — already a thousand miles from the sea—commenced the widespread evangelism of Cameron's first long journey.

Joined by Mr. Leaman, of the American Presbyterian Mission, who had a large supply of Christian literature, Messrs. Cameron and Nicoll set out in August, 1877, for the provincial capital—a three weeks' journey overland through a populous country, affording excellent opportunity for preaching. Good sales and an attentive hearing for the Gospel were found during their nine days' stay at Ch'eng-tu, with the size and grandeur of which the visitors were much impressed.

In mid-September they started west again, across a well-watered plain, bounded by the lofty hills that lie beyond Kwan-hien.

Ten days' difficult travelling southward brought them to Ya-chau, the commercial gateway of Eastern Thibet. On a pouring wet night at the end of September they reached the free ferry outside the city, and, after crossing, a weary walk to the gates and a long search for the inn to which their things had been taken, lay between them and rest.

Ya-chau is a place of importance; the emporium

of the trade in brick tea, so essential to Thibetan existence. Water communication connects it with Ch'ung-k'ing; and baggage animals and poorly paid coolies literally swarm the roads during the travelling seasons. Of these men Cameron wrote :—

"The loads the coolies manage to carry are almost incredible, varying from about 130 to 400 lbs. in weight! On one occasion a coolie fell down not far from where we were, and it required the united strength of three of us to help him get his load up to his shoulders again. They only travel from six to nine miles a day. . . . The food of these men consists chiefly of potatoes, and Indian corn made into coarse cakes. They sleep on the clay floor of the wayside inns, with a thin mat beneath them, and very little covering to keep them warm. But for the number that lie together I do not know how they could bear the cold, for the frost is often severe in these parts. How they manage to support themselves and their families upon the miserable pittance they earn is a problem I have not yet solved."

Ya-chau alone might well have claimed the brethren's lifework, but they could not stay. A few books were sold, one morning given to street preaching, and they started again for Ts'ing-k'i, a week's journey southward. In a city at which they were detained by Mr. Nicoll's repeated attacks of ague, the people listened in attentive crowds, asking many questions. One of the temples had a large number of idols made to resemble foreigners in appearance and dress, and, more extraordinary still, others that were worshipped

as "*Gods of Opium*," three of which had their mouths smeared with the abominable stuff.

"We met a few Thibetans on the street," wrote Mr. Cameron, "and a Lama with his train. He was seated in a green-coloured chair, and had a button on his cap, somewhat after the style of a mandarin. He was followed by quite a large party of priests and Lamas on horseback, with shaven heads, and attended by others on foot who seemed to be Chinese. This man was of a darker complexion, and had thinner features than the average Chinaman. In the same city we also found fish, potatoes, and splendid bread—the nearest approach to our Glasgow scones of any I have yet seen."

Mr. Nicoll grew so much worse here, that after thought and prayer it was felt that he could not continue the journey west, but must return by easy stages to Ch'ung-k'ing. Mr. Leaman undertook to accompany him, as he was unfit to travel alone; and thus, early in October, the three friends had to part, Cameron setting out upon his solitary way to Eastern Thibet.

He was alone now. One coolie and a mule sufficed for his small baggage, the bulk of his silver being sewn into an inner garment he carried upon his own person. Though but a moderate allowance, it proved burdensome enough during the long march.

"I miss my companions much," he wrote, "but shall soon get accustomed to being alone."

Well it is for the solitary worker in the far-off heathen lands that he can claim the Master's promise

MR. JAMES CAMERON IN TRAVELLING DRESS.

"Lo, I am with you alway!" Four eventful months were to elapse ere, in another country, having passed as near to the gates of death as a man may, without quite crossing their shadowy portal, Cameron was again to meet a fellow-Christian, or hear the music of his native tongue. But surely it was well worth while. How else could he so deeply have learned the blessedness of him who makes the LORD alone his trust?

Five days later, in the early sunlight of an autumn morning, the border town of Ta-tsien-lu was reached.

Up to this point the mandarins rule directly, as in other parts of China; beyond, the people, only indirectly subject to Pekin, are styled Man-tsi,* and governed by their own Lamas. In customs, religion,

* Not altogether so exclusive as their countrymen of Thibet proper, the Man-tsi still have strong anti-foreign prejudices, and, while allowing Chinese officials merchants, and others to live

appearance, dress, and language, they are true Thibetans, although their territory lies within the province of SI-CH'UEN.

Eastern Thibet now lay ahead, with its strange people, unknown language, wild mountainous uplands, and everlasting snows; in all the darkness of its unbroken heathenism; a country never previously entered by the Protestant missionary. The border town was small and unimportant. Half its inhabitants were Man-tsi, and the Lamasery * within its walls marked the modification of religious and political opinions. Cameron supplied the city well with tracts, purchased the few commodities needed for barter, and on October 16th commenced the next stage, seven days across the mountains to Li-t'ang.

It was hard travelling through a lofty, barren country. For two weeks the road rarely, if ever, descended below twelve thousand feet, and night accommodation was often difficult to find. Of the first inn, he wrote:—

"They gave us a miserable place to sleep in, and the night was very cold. There was no bed except a little straw. The floor was broken and so were the walls, through

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and travel amongst them for purely business purposes, they do not permit any Chinese *women* to pass the border; Ta-tsien-lu being the last point at which such may be found.

* Lamaseries are the Thibetan religious edifices connected with *Lamaism*, the form of Buddhism prevalent in Thibet. They may be broadly said to combine the uses of temple, monastery, and Government offices.

which the wind came freely, making us glad to escape to the common room, and find a seat near the fire of green wood."

Tsan-pa, the staple food of the Thibetans, was in vogue here, and the travellers learned that it must be their main subsistence when their rice was done.

"The people have a very dark wheat," wrote Cameron, "which they thoroughly dry in an open pan over the fire, and afterwards grind with a hand-mill, the flour so made being called *Tsan-pa Mien*. Then brick-tea is well boiled, and strained through a bamboo sieve, into a churn, something like our old-fashioned country churns at home; a handful of butter and a little salt are next added, and the whole is well churned together as if for butter making. The liquid is poured into basins, and each person adds enough *Tsan-pa* flour to make it into a paste; this he does with his hand, keeping the basin spinning round all the while. Then the mixture is taken up by handfuls, crushed, and eaten; and when the whole is finished they wind up by cleaning the basin with the tongue! Fortunately each person uses his own basin, and carries it with him!"

Truly chopsticks and civilisation were left well behind! And what now lay ahead? Rumours of difficulty and danger were rife. On the first night the landlord and certain fellow-pilgrims so alarmed and discouraged Cameron's SI-CH'UEN coolie, that the Scotchman had to give him a good dose of medicine before he would attempt to sleep. A better tonic still, however, was his master's quiet faith and confidence. Unarmed, and without defence, except

in GOD, the missionary had no fear, and by degrees his coolie gained courage.

"Dangers there are," Cameron acknowledged; "but GOD will bring us through."

Next day, long steep ascents over wet slippery paths brought them above the morning fogs into bright sunshine, and, crossing the snow line, they found themselves in intense cold, surrounded by the white peaks of the mountains bordering on Thibet. The afternoon descent into the valleys was welcome. Cattle, sheep, and horses were grazing on the lower slopes. Here and there a number of strongly built, square-looking, three-storied houses, proclaimed the presence of a Man-tsi settlement, and the people themselves were to be met in their sheep-skin dresses, armed with long knives and swords, secured in their broad belts. Their rough, woollen garments of various colours, loosely made in one piece (not unlike a short dressing-gown), were girded below the waist with long pieces of woven cloth, and high blanket boots, reaching almost to the knee, completed the costume. Both men and women had dark matted hair, which looked as if no comb had passed through it for years.

"Some are wiser," wrote the observant Scotchman, "and cut it off."

Ablutions, either of the face or person, are *de trop* among Man-tsi, who never wash, unless occasionally at the New Year. The journal runs:—

"A little distance from our halting place we overtook a

man who walked on with us, and knew a few words of Chinese. 'Is there an inn here?' I inquired.

"'I have a place where strangers put up; but what have you to pay for lodging?'"

"'Tobacco, bread, and needles,' I replied. The latter being current coin in Thibet.

"He turned up his nose at this, said he did not want such things, and would take silver only if he lodged us. This I refused to give. Near his house we met a Chinaman in Thibetan guise. He also tried for silver, but seeing that I was determined in my refusal he gave it up, advised the first man to take us in, and came with us to the house. During the evening we discovered that he was son-in-law to our host.

"We passed through a door into a large enclosure, where a huge chained dog attacked us, though we were surrounded by several members of the family who came forward to unload our mule and carry in the things. A young, but strong-looking woman caught hold of the dog's rope and pulled him back with all her might—he on his hind legs attempting to spring. Getting into the house was far from easy. It was terribly dark, and the lower part of the building, as we walked across it, felt more like a stable than a room. I found afterwards that it really was so. Presently I stumbled against a staircase, and was told to ascend it. A light glimmered near the top, and presently some one appeared with a piece of burning firewood, which guided me into the room. Roughly speaking, it must have been eighteen feet by twelve, and formed the family apartment and guest chamber for chance lodgers.

"On one side was the kitchen range, with two large iron pans; and clean milking utensils, hooped with iron. Five chips of wood laid on the gridiron and suspended from the roof by a chain, served as a lamp. The roof was about six feet from the floor. A dresser with shelves

behind the cooking stove displayed a number of strong, bright brass plates. The room possessed neither bench, stool, nor chair; a small short-legged construction, that stood on one side, doing duty as table.

"Around the room were small heaps of skins, on one of which I seated myself, to the amusement of the younger members of the family, who all sat on the floor. The household consisted of six persons, the father and mother, two grown-up daughters, and two little boys. The son-in-law tried to palm himself off as a Government interpreter; but when I proved sceptical, confessed his relationship and occupation,—the cultivation of a piece of land near by. Tea was soon ready, and then there was a general laugh, as we had no basins. The family kindly lent us some, and we had bread and eggs with our tea. The two men, our host and his son-in-law, asked for an egg each, which I gave them, and then the Chinaman left.

"On his departure the fun began. I wanted to learn a few words of the language, and my blunders afforded entertainment. It does not seem to be difficult. Many of the sounds are unknown to the Chinese, but easy of acquirement, I should judge, to a foreigner. Several household things, such as tables, etc., retain their Chinese names, these luxuries being unknown to the old Thibetans. I learnt and wrote down several useful words and sentences. Our host requested me to read them over, and was highly pleased with their correctness. He always put me right if I gave a wrong sound.

"Very soon we were quite on friendly terms, only we could not converse much. We were invited to eat *Tsan-pa*, and when our rice was ready I gave them some. The host shared it with his boys; and when we had finished our meal he divided the remainder amongst the family, keeping by far the largest part for himself and his favourite son.

"Supper over, our sitting-room became the common

bedroom, the women taking one side and we the other. They only spread a few skins on the floor, the garments they wear during the day doing duty as bed covers. The master of the house had a sort of light sheet, which was well tucked in about him by one of the daughters ere she retired. Quietness soon reigned, and after some wakeful hours I had a sound sleep.

"We were up early, and, after eating a little rice gruel, paid our host one hundred cash (equal to about fourpence) and a little tobacco. He was delighted at our liberality, and before I left gave me an enjoyable draught of sweet milk.

"'If you ever pass again, be sure to put up at my house!'

"'I certainly shall,' I answered, as we parted on the road."

Hard and exhausting travelling followed, through wild country, to the difficulties of which, poor fare and worse accommodation added not a little. "A huge, snow-clad mountain" had to be crossed ere they could reach their next Sabbath's halting-place.

"The first part of the ascent was steep—up the rough bed of a torrent, fortunately dry, but bad for walking. The lower part of the mountain was well wooded; but it was bitterly cold, the wind often seeming to pierce to our very bones. Both of us had sore and swollen lips, heavy colds, and bad throats. . . . On the summit the wind was very high, and we had hail; but things bettered as we descended the other side."

As they hastened down-hill, anxious to reach some sort of shelter before night, the travellers were unexpectedly hailed from below by a Chinese official in charge of a small roadside station—two tiny huts hidden by the bank. This lonely settlement scarcely

looked prepossessing, but the people seemed kind, and Cameron determined to remain with them over Sunday. The flat-roofed cottage was just high enough to permit the tall foreigner to stand erect inside, without taking advantage of the aperture left in the middle, for the double purpose of giving the light entrance, and the smoke exit. Other window there was none, and when the hospitable fire burnt high, the visitors were fairly driven by the smoke into the snow outside. Much real rest and comfort, however, were found here.

"Our host treated us well," wrote Mr. Cameron, "bringing us tea, bread, a large basin of soup, with plenty of meat in it. We enjoyed it heartily, and he told us that it was a Man-tsi dish, and contained milk, butter, and vegetables. Thus did our Father show His gracious care for us. He well knew that we needed rest and refreshment, and here they were unexpectedly provided, in a place we should certainly have passed had we not been hailed."

Most of the quiet Sunday was spent in conversation about the things of GOD. The kindly host, alas! was an opium smoker, and consequently largely unable to grasp spiritual truth. He could read and write, however, and books, in which he seemed interested, were left with him.

Li-t'ang was still eighty miles away. An early start and a long day's journey brought them next evening to a lonely wayside house, where they might have found shelter; but Cameron determined to go on, not liking the appearance of the people. Twilight closed in upon their rapid walk, and

shepherds' tents by grazing flocks were passed as the sun went down. The moon rose, full and clear, and the belated travellers pushed on among snow steeps, till the poor discouraged coolie quite gave way. He had no burden to carry, the mule having done double duty; but even so, and in spite of his companion's constant cheer and help, he seemed to lose all hope. The last climb was the worst.

"Had there been a rock," wrote Cameron, "or even a few bushes to afford the least shelter, we should certainly have passed the night on the hillside, although so awfully cold. Harbour lights were never more welcome to tempest-tossed mariners than was the heap of stones that marked the summit of the hill to me and my weary companion! We were 13,700 feet above sea level. The descent was difficult. The cold grew more intense. On gaining the valley we found a good road leading through pastures, and in many places saw the watch-fires of the shepherds. . . . At last we reached a village. All the people had gone to bed, and we knew they would be afraid to get up, thinking that we were robbers. The dogs set up such a barking, however, that at last one man appeared, but kept judiciously away.

"'Where can we put up for the night?' I asked.

"It was some time before he pointed to a house.

"'Will you call the people for us?'

"He refused, and slunk away.

"I lifted up my heart in prayer to GOD, and again knocked at the first house we had tried. It seemed long before any response was given; and we had almost made up our minds to pass the night under the overhanging roof of a temple near by, when our Father answered prayer, and very soon we were seated by a good fire, with a pot of

hot tea before us! . . . The people of the house told us that we must have walked fifty-six miles since morning."

The banks of a quiet stream threading a fine ravine led them next day to Li-t'ang, which, though but a small and unimportant place, possesses the special interest of being one of the highest cities in the world. The houses are wretched, and population scanty, not amounting to more than a thousand families. About one hundred of the men are Chinese tradesmen and merchants from the distant province of SHAN-SI, and soldiers or servants in the official households. The only object that pleases the eye is the gleaming golden roof of the great Lamasery at the end of the principal street. Within its far-reaching enclosure, this elaborate structure contains no fewer than three thousand Lamas! A second great Lamasery some little distance beyond the walls, is said to be inhabited by almost as large a number of these indolent, immoral priests

The oppression that the people have to suffer at the hands of their religious rulers was an oft-recurring subject.

"Two-thirds of the land," wrote Mr. Cameron, "is said to belong to the Lamas. The people have to pay tithes regularly four times a year; and many are so poor that, in the winter, they are dependent on the priest for food. In lending, his measure is small, but in receiving back again he employs a larger measure, and requires interest besides. Money is borrowed on the same hard terms; and if it is not paid back the interest amounts to so much that the client either becomes a beggar, or refuses to pay. If the latter, he

is left alone until the Lamas see that he has some little substance; then they pounce upon him, and away go all his earnings.

"The gross immoralities of the Lamas cannot be described. They dread the foreigner entering their country, lest the people should believe the new doctrine, and no longer pay them for chanting prayers.

"'If you succeed in getting the people to hear your teachings, we shall soon have no rice to eat,' they openly avowed to the French priests."

The painted walls and pillared portico of the great Lamasery, giving access to the stairway and extensive buildings within, were described by the traveller. But further he was not allowed to penetrate. As usual in Buddhist buildings the courtyard frescoes crudely portrayed the blessedness or torments of a future state, for all in that unevangelised country anticipate reward or punishment in the life to come.

Leaving the little, lone and lofty Tartar city, the travellers journeyed on to Ba-t'ang, the next important centre, a long week's tramp over the snow-clad uplands. The first night a kindly Chinaman offered to take them in, and as they walked together he heard for the first time the wonders of a Saviour's love. The sun had set before they reached his dwelling, and it was piercingly cold.

"Upon arriving," says Mr. Cameron, "we were ushered into our room. Its dismal appearance almost beggared description! On a low partition a tribe of hens were roosting. Later on these were removed, that our next day's food, in the shape of rolled lumps of dough, might

be placed to dry where they had been. The room was so narrow that this was the only expedient. Our beds were made of earth, raised about eighteen inches from the floor. We had no fire, and, not feeling well, I had to lie down with a burning skin, at the same time almost shivering with cold."

Next day we expect to find the pioneer ill and unable to go forward, but the journal simply reads, "Up early, and away before the sun shone over the mountains"!

Rough roads, poor accommodation, cold, danger, and loneliness, were by this time familiar enough to the solitary travellers; and yet the last three days of their journey to Ba-t'ang seemed worse than any that had gone before. Still higher mountain passes, still rougher roads among eternal snows, and scarce a trace of human habitations. On the last day of October the highest point was reached—an elevation of 15,600 feet, considerably above the summit of Mont Blanc. More than 7,000 feet below them lay the city of Ba-t'ang, which had to be made that night. A lonely barren country stretched between. For twenty miles they did not meet a single living being, and then only encountered one solitary man. They had been walking since before dawn, and long ere they reached the city, darkness came on. When at last, footsore and weary, they did arrive, it seemed as though they would never find lodging. Ba-t'ang boasts of no inns. Strangers have to seek accommodation in private houses, or go without. Again and again the foreigner and his

attendant were refused quarters, after having patiently answered all the various inquiries made as to their respectability.

"At last," wrote Cameron, "a woman took pity on us, and led us to a resting-place—not a very good one; but we were thankful for it. 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.'"

Grateful for the refuge thus provided from frost and cold, the weary strangers prepared to rest. The bed looked very pleasant, but "things are not what they seem."

"Sleep I could not. For a time I scarcely imagined what the cause might be, not having had much trouble from nocturnal visitors since we left the plains of SI-CH'UEN. At last, however, I struck a light, and to my dismay found my Ba-t'ang bed almost as bad as those that had cost me so many restless nights further east. My foes gave me no peace; and there was nothing for it but just to heave a sigh and lie down again!"

Ba-t'ang, at which four days were spent, is on the main road to Thibet, and not far from the frontier of that great closed land. Its small but beautiful valley, open towards the south, is surrounded by lofty sheltering mountains. The climate consequently is comparatively mild, and some fruit and vegetables can be grown. The loftiest point in the neighbourhood is said to be 22,000 feet high. The Chinese mandarin here was quite friendly.

"Have you any intention of seeking to enter Thibet?" he asked the stranger. "No? Ah, that

is excellent! The Lamas are determined in their opposition to foreigners crossing the border; in fact, it cannot be done."

Ignorant of the language and customs of the people, it would indeed have been out of the question for Cameron at that time to have penetrated Thibet. The day is yet to dawn that shall see those closed doors thrown open to the messengers of CHRIST. As it was, the missionary had to content himself with telling the glad tidings to the Chinese official and his friends, who listened with some attention, and showed him much kindness. Although never before visited by a Protestant missionary, Ba-t'ang had long been the home of Roman Catholic workers, and Cameron found two French priests resident there, one of whom gave him much information. He did not seem to find his position encouraging, owing to the powerful influence of the Lamas.

Close to Ba-t'ang run the upper waters of the Yang-tsi, here only two hundred yards wide. Ten days' journey beyond, on the northern border of YUN-NAN, lies the last Thibetan settlement, for which Cameron set out early in November, with an official escort for the dangerous roads. Among great snow-clad mountains the pioneers pushed on, scorched by frost, bitter cutting winds, snow-glare, and brilliant sunshine, till face and hands were skinned again and again. The boundary was reached on the third day. A large detachment of soldiery had just arrived to guard the Ba-t'ang high-road to Thibet proper. The missionary

stood on the actual border-line of that great closed land. It was the point of his nearest approach; and as he turned aside from the high-road, so long followed, to go southward towards YUN-NAN, his heart was full.

"We could see the houses of the Thibetans," he wrote; "but at a considerable distance. A good view was obtained of the border, as we had to walk just outside it for a long way. Near at hand were low-lying hills, and in the distance lofty, snow-clad peaks. As I gazed upon it I wondered when the messengers of JESUS would have free access there. *It will be open some day.*"

In mid-November the mountain boundary between Eastern Thibet and YUN-NAN was crossed, and four days later the snow-capped heights round A-ten-tsi came into view, followed by the little valley itself, with its flat-roofed, compact-looking settlement. The streets were narrow, and plentifully supplied with mal-odorous refuse. But a small room in an inn—secured without much difficulty—afforded matter for thankfulness.

Shelter and supplies had been reached just in time; for on the very night of his arrival Cameron was taken ill with severe continued fever. For two or three weeks he lay suffering and helpless, at one time for several days quite thinking the end was near. His heart was in perfect peace: "To one who lives for GOD what could death be but gain?" The LORD was with him; he did not feel alone. The only matter that gave him concern was the question as to what

was to become of his unused silver. There could not have been much of it, for he had already been travelling three months, and had started with no superabundant supply, but, "See what a trouble it is to be rich . . ." the journal naïvely remarks. Daily prayer, however, was ascending for the far-off, solitary worker; and it pleased the LORD to spare his valued life for a few more years of toilsome and devoted service. Slowly the fever began to abate, and toward the end of November returning strength made him long to be on his way. Before leaving A-ten-tsi he had the joy of fully preaching CHRIST to the people and officials of that remote Chinese-Thibetan town.

The nearest mission station, Bhamô, in Upper Burmah, was still almost two months away across western YUN-NAN. Between lay the whole great province, altogether destitute of Gospel light, never even visited by a Protestant missionary, till Mr. McCarthy passed through five months before. What needs, what waiting fields!

Leaving the cold and snows of A-ten-tsi on December 3rd, Cameron struck south to Ta-li, a prefectural city of YUN-NAN, where we now have a station and several workers, although at that time the Roman Catholic Mission was the only one within its walls. Barren heights, and wild, lonely passes were gradually exchanged for open country, increasingly populous and cultivated, as the road descended to milder regions; and soon the difficulties and dangers of those long weeks among eternal

snows, replaced by very different scenes, became a memory of the past.

Before long the first purely Chinese village was reached, and Cameron was able once again to preach the Gospel without interpretation, the people listening with interest, and seeming to understand all he said. At Wei-si, the capital of a district where three of the aboriginal tribes of western China (the Man-tsi, Mo-so, and Min-kia) are found, Cameron called upon all the officials, some of whom listened with much attention to the things of GOD.

Most of the Min-kia aborigines could speak no language but their own, but some had learnt Chinese, and he was unexpectedly brought into contact with a family of this type.

The travellers had completely lost their way, and as darkness came on found themselves wandering in some fields beside a stream, across which a few houses were espied. Making for one of these, they requested a night's lodging, and were peremptorily refused.

"You had better pass on to the next settlement," remarked the owner; "there you may get a bed."

Further search in the gathering darkness scarcely seemed hopeful; and, hungry and tired, they decided to camp out where they were, rather than risk uncertainty. Seeing this, the householder somewhat grudgingly invited them into his grounds, and left them to make a fire and settle down for the night under the open verandah. After their evening meal he and his son came out and sat down. Though the settlement was Min-kia, they spoke Chinese fluently, and Cameron made good use of his opportunity to learn something of the history and habits of the tribe. The Mo-so, it

seems, were the real aborigines of the district; how long the Min-kia had been there, or whence they originally came, none could tell. For centuries they had been settled in and around SI-CH'UEN; and although possessed of no written language, and in close contact with other races, had wonderfully preserved their identity.

As the evening wore on, two men from neighbouring houses joined them round the glowing embers, in the chill December moonlight. It was a curious scene—natural enough to the simple people themselves, but strange, and very interesting, to the travelled foreigner. By-and-by, as the householders began to feel at ease, he drew their attention to the most important of all themes; and great was the interest with which they listened to the wonderful story of the love of GOD, and His "so great salvation" for all men, and for *them*. There and thus in the frosty moonlight, for the first time probably, the Gospel was brought to the Min-kia! Some of them could read Chinese, and welcomed the tracts left to recall the strange new truths, first heard that Christmas season, from the only missionary they had ever met.

"I was glad indeed," he wrote, "that we had lost our road that night; and although my bed was low and hard and cold, I slept as soundly as if in the best inn!"

Four days later Ta-li Fu was sighted in its densely populous valley, by the shores of a beautiful lake, and not far from a range of hills decked with snow. The city and neighbourhood offer noble scope for Christian work, as Cameron found, preaching openly in the streets and tea-shops to large and attentive audiences. A Roman Catholic Bishop and two priests were carrying on a wide work here.

"When will Protestant missionaries be labouring in these regions?" sorrowfully wrote the pioneer.

Christmas was spent at Ta-li ; and then on toward the south-west the march was resumed for Bhamô. The ground was now more trodden ; for Cameron was here the second missionary who had passed that way.* The last days of the old year found him amongst the narrow valleys, rough roads, and mountain streams beyond Ta-li ; and by New Year's day, 1878, he was climbing the almost interminable hills surrounding Yung-p'ing Hien. With a solitary French priest, encountered here, the equally lonely Scotch missionary was glad to hold some little conversation in Chinese. His account of matters was far from cheering. He had heard of our station in Bhamô, and surmised that Cameron was going thither ; but he spoke much of the dangers of the road. Two priests who had been sent that way in 1876 had been lost, and never heard of since. It was supposed they, too, had been murdered.

Preaching in the crowded streets and tea-shops of Yung-ch'ang, and distributing tracts, which the people received willingly, occupied the first Sunday in the New Year ; and then through lofty snow-clad hills, Cameron made his way to Momien. Rooms here were hard to obtain. The trade route had fallen into

* Just three years previously (at the close of 1874) Augustus Margary had been the first foreigner in these districts. The Commission sent to inquire into his murder at Man-wyne had subsequently taken the same route. Mr. McCarthy, in the summer of 1877, and afterwards Captain Gill and Mr. Mesney, had also preceded Mr. Cameron by a few months ; but he was only the second missionary traveller to cross the borderland.

the hands of banditti, and many travellers had already been detained for weeks, unable to proceed. A small corner in a loft, occupied by at least twenty others, several of whom were constant opium smokers, was the only refuge at first to be found, but rather better quarters were secured later on. The military had gone out to deal with the marauders, and soon after Cameron's arrival they returned with seventeen, of whom all but two were beheaded. Their heads were put in cages by the roadside, as a warning to passers-by, and their bodies left to lie for several days in the open field.

The road was now moderately safe; and large companies of travellers who had been detained at Momien continued their journey to Man-wyne, our friends amongst them finding good opportunities for conversation about the Gospel.

Their hostess at Man-wyne, a good old lady, was garrulous about the Bhamô foreign teachers. She had a son across the Burman frontier, who had been very ill about a year before. He was quite unconscious, in high fever and extremely weak, when two English missionaries, travelling amongst the Kahchen hills, arrived at the little town in which he was, and strangely enough put up next door. All they could do to save his life they did; and when the anxious mother arrived, having ridden in haste across the wild and dangerous borderland, she found, to her unspeakable joy, that her boy was on the road to rapid recovery.

"How can I express my gratitude," she said, to the strangers who had saved his life!

Their kindness was unforgotten. And on inquiring, Cameron found that the much-loved missionaries were none other than Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau of the C. I. M.

Three days were spent at Man-wyne, among the Shans, Kah-chens, and Chinese who thronged the market and tea-shops. And then, under the escort of a Kah-chen mountain chief, Cameron went on to Bhamô across country much like the Thibetan highlands,—sometimes hospitably entertained, and sometimes camping out by the way. Many opportunities for preaching were found *en route*, but at the end of ten days a letter from the British political agent at Bhamô requested him to come down at once to that city, and give up all thought of returning to China *viâ* YUN-NAN! Following these instructions he left the mountains, paid a brief visit to Messrs. Soltau and Adams, at Bhamô, and thence descending the Irrawaddy to Rangoon, took steamer to Canton, re-entering China at that point.

Thus were commenced the itinerant labours of this noble missionary evangelist, who during the first seven years of his wanderings travelled through seventeen provinces of China proper, and beyond the Great Wall, and who in many an important region was privileged to be the first witness for JESUS, and salvation through His Name

CHAPTER XXI.

THIRTY THOUSAND MILES IN SAFETY.

TWO years had now elapsed since the September day, in 1876, when the Convention was signed at Chefoo, that practically opened inland China to missionary effort. Far and wide, during this brief interval, our brethren travelled, through all the hitherto unentered provinces, proving that China's age-long seclusion was indeed ended, and its people brought at last within reach of the Gospel.

Valignani had never been able to land upon the forbidden shore. These men, within two years, had journeyed thirty thousand miles through the unknown; and within five years from the Convention not only penetrated with the Gospel every one of the eighteen provinces, but itinerated widely in Manchuria, and crossed the borders of Mongolia as well.

A glance at the accompanying map, published in May 1878, will give some idea of the extent of the itinerations accomplished at this time. Taken collectively, they form a marked epoch in the story of the Inland Mission, which at the signing of the Chefoo Convention had almost completed its first decade.

Not a little devotion and zeal, heroism and patient endurance, are represented by the windings of this small white line! The men who, in face of loneliness and hardship, pioneered a way in these distant regions for the Gospel, willing to lay down life itself that inland China might learn a Saviour's love, are unknown, it may be, to the world's praise and honour, but their reward and their record are waiting—above.

Both at the time of these journeys, and subsequently, much criticism fell to the share of the Inland Mission in connection with them. They were condemned as aimless wanderings, and considered a waste of time and strength. And if nothing more had been their object or their outcome than a passing evangelistic visit and some added knowledge of the country and people, such strictures had, perhaps, been just. Time, however, has proved that they were a means to an important end, as a glance at the present position of the C. I. M. stations throughout inland China will abundantly attest.

Up to the time of which we write the interior of this vast land, although nominally accessible to missionary effort, was practically shut; for no one had gone to open the door. No Protestant missionaries were residing in those inland provinces, and in the majority of them none had even travelled to tell of CHRIST. This our brethren did, and soon their presence led to settled work in many places.

Christian books and tracts were scattered widely on these journeys, and commenced their quiet influence in moulding thought and awakening desire. Friendships were formed among the people, and impressions made of the utmost value, at such a crisis, when China by treaty-right was fully thrown open to foreigners. In hundreds of towns and cities the first stranger to be known was the Christian missionary, speaking the language and wearing the dress of those to whom he brought nothing but love.

It would be difficult indeed to measure the far-reaching influence for good of a life like Cameron's, for example, upon the vast number of people with whom he came in contact during the six years of his unparalleled itinerations. Apart altogether from the direct result of his preaching and bookselling work, hundreds of thousands must have got from his Christ-like life, as he passed through every province in China, except one, some idea of the value and power of his Faith.

These were the pioneers, but others quickly followed. Ere long the vast interior of China was opened up to the residence of women as well as men, and the extended operations of the Inland Mission to-day are largely based upon the outcome of those first journeys.

"But," some will say, "why seek to cover so large a field? It is clearly true that if you are to scatter yourselves over the whole of China you must go and itinerate first. But why attempt the impossible? '*Qui trop embrasse mal étreint.*' Better remain in some localised, limited region, which you may hope adequately to influence, and let the work gradually grow from that settled point. These itinerations are a mistake; and the more permanent work to which they lead a waste of power."

To which we answer, the responsibility rests not upon us. We are only seeking to obey a command, clear, definite, unalterable: "preach the Gospel *to every creature.*" The principles that would hold us

back here would have kept us from coming to China at all ; for there is surely plenty to do at home without leaving our own shores ! But the region to be reached is both a fact and a command.

Look at it as a fact.

Imagine Europe solidified ; her English isles and her peninsulas—Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal, Italy, and Greece—drawn into the continental bulk ; and one semi-circular shore line running for over four thousand miles with scarce a bay or inlet, from the White Sea to the Black. Imagine that solid Europe, a single country with a single capital ; one Emperor, one civilisation, one language, though spoken forms vary with varying climate and sphere. Imagine it possessing one national type of physique, education, thought, faith, manners, and morals. Imagine it one of the most ancient empires in the world ; called by a single name ; and inhabited, according to its last imperial estimate, by fifty millions *more* human beings than the entire population of Europe. Finally, imagine it heathen, densely, darkly heathen, with all that that involves of suffering, sin, and need, and you have China.

Larger than the whole of Europe, and much more populous, how could a mission-centre in London or Paris, in Rome or Constantinople, evangelise such a sphere ? How many millenniums would it require for the good seed of the Kingdom to spread, by a gradual livening process, from the sea-board to the remotest

regions of Norway, Germany, or Russia? When would the Gospel have reached England from Rome had it not been for the devoted missionaries who traversed hundreds of miles of unevangelised territory lying between, to get to the wild people of the remote island that we call home?

Surely one mission-station at the capital, at least, of every country would be little enough for the evangelisation of this heathen Europe that we picture.

And the region to be reached is also a command. What did our Master mean, what responsibility did He lay upon us when He said, "preach the Gospel to *every creature*"?

As a Mission, we have been face to face with an unevangelised continent, million-peopled, and open to us in almost every part—a land that CHRIST has called His people to possess for Him. Given such a fact and such a commission, nothing less than the evangelisation of the whole of China, can be our duty.

But how make such a duty do-able? How accomplish such a work?

The leaders of the Inland Mission have been second to none in their deep sense of the importance of localised missionary and pastoral efforts. It is not the *relative* value of such methods, as compared to wide-spread evangelisation, that they have been called to emphasise, but the necessity of both.

"As well might one discuss," writes Mr. Hudson Taylor, "the relative merits of land and water, of mountains and plains, of animals and vegetables. All exist, all are in-

dispensable. The one does not supersede the other, but is its necessary complement."

Evangelisation, widespread, continuous, embracing "every creature," is the duty of the Church, as long as there is any region without the stated preaching of the Gospel.

I. It is no new method.

It is old as the Gospel itself; for it dates from the ministry of Him who said, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth;" and who left with His disciples as his last message, "Go ye into all the world." They literally obeyed this command, and "went everywhere preaching the Word."

"It might well have been asked then," continues Mr. Taylor, "would such itinerations accomplish anything of permanent value when the work extended beyond the limits of Palestine to the heathen world where the darkness around was so great? But history proves that the task thus attempted was actually accomplished, and speedily accomplished. And we do well to inquire, is there any reason to assume that similar work done now in China would be attended with results less valuable and encouraging? My own firm belief is that as great effects would be now seen in China from similar labours as were seen eighteen hundred years ago in Asia Minor and in Europe, and that our difficulty lies mainly in the obstacles that exist in the way of our doing the work.

"The Gospel we have to preach is the same as that proclaimed by the Apostles of old. It is said in the Word to be seed; 'incorruptible,' that is, imperishable

seed. Scatter it where you will, it cannot perish. It may lie dormant, and lie long, like wheat in an Egyptian sarcophagus. But it will not die. It 'liveth and abideth for ever.'

"But what *is* the seed? It is not the printed Scriptures, merely. . . . It is not Christian books and tracts, useful as they are in their place. . . . This seed is the *preached* Gospel, the proclaimed good news of something which the heathen, *as they are*, can appreciate; the personal testimony of living witnesses to the LORD JESUS CHRIST as an almighty and an immediate Deliverer from the power of sin, as well as from its eternal consequences.

"Talk theory to the heathen, and they are generally unmoved; tell them merely of blessings in store for the future, and they are often too sceptical or too occupied with the pressure of present necessity to hear what you have to say. But, as experience proves, tell your audience that you have an infallible help for every opium smoker among them, for every drunkard, for every gambler; that you proclaim a Saviour who has never once failed to save immediately any soul that really trusted Him, both from the power of sin and from its eternal consequences, and you will soon see that the Gospel is good news to your hearers, that it can command attention, and will accomplish the mightiest changes the mind of man can conceive, or his heart desire.

"But so to preach CHRIST we must ourselves be filled with the SPIRIT, be abiding in CHRIST, be conscious of the fulness and power of His great salvation. The man who is consciously overcome by sin, who habitually succumbs to temptation, who is only half saved himself, cannot preach such a Gospel. And this, brethren, I confess with shame, was my experience for many years. But when conscious of the indwelling of an Almighty Saviour we *can* preach CHRIST, and are not afraid to speak good of His Name."

II. It is no unfruitful method.

Many, in all mission-fields, have been led to CHRIST through hearing the Gospel thus preached for the first time, and from the experience of our own workers in China not a few instances might be given. But not only in immediate conversions is this widespread itineration fruitful. It is also most important as a *preparatory* work. In this connection Mr. Taylor adds:—

"The missionary who has frequently itinerated through a district is looked upon by many with kindly feelings. His occasional presence has removed misapprehension, and he has made some friends. His character and objects are becoming understood, and the help thus secured will go far to carry him through remaining opposition.

"But in more important ways, also, such work is essential, and economical of time, labour, and money, to a high degree. The Chinaman is a slow-thinking being. . . . Try to imagine his difficulty in understanding the most elementary truth about the existence of the one true GOD. But without that knowledge a man has no true idea of sin as the transgression of GOD'S law. And without the knowledge of a Being who can forgive sin, the offer of a Saviour is useless. The Buddhist can understand some system of counterpoising sin, but of an atonement he can form no conception.

"While there will everywhere be found a few prepared of the HOLY SPIRIT to receive the Gospel at the first offer, the great mass of the people will only gain a very general idea of the truths you present. But even if it be impossible to go again for some time, this impression will not be lost or useless. Superficial work is often done in a hurry,

but solid, abiding results, in China, generally take a few years. The beginner, who is so inexperienced as to have no fears for the future, may be carried away by what he sees of apparently rapid success. But it is only after time has been allowed for truth to grow and deepen in its hold upon mind and spirit, that the quiet, steady Christians are gathered in, who become the strength of the Church. And while the Truth is thus slowly permeating, I do not think it is a loss of time to go over a good deal of ground and start its first process.

"Do as they do in Manitoba; go over the land and plough, break up the soil, throw in the seed, go away, and come again to find a harvest. . . . I would expect to see, *in the long run*, a very much larger ingathering from this sort of itinerant work than from efforts restricted to a small corner of the field.

"In conclusion, let us ever bear in mind that the whole work is the work of GOD. Each agent performs but a small part, yet he is not isolated. A man's conversion is, I believe, a regenerative change produced by the HOLY GHOST. It is not an influence produced by man on the mind of his fellow-man. And I believe that the HOLY GHOST will never produce that regenerative change, and then leave the soul to struggle on alone. If the LORD sends Paul to plant, He will certainly send Apollos to water."

WOMAN'S WORK FOR WOMAN.

"We, happy Englishwomen, who can read, write, and enjoy varied studies—we are debtors to every woman who cannot. There are thousands of women quite as intelligent as we are, who are ignorant only because they have not had our privileges. We are deeply in debt to them. We women who are free, who are placed in the social position for which GOD designed us, who are honoured, cared for, and loved—we are debtors to every zenana captive, debtors to all who are refused woman's real rights, debtors to the whole secluded, degraded, down-trodden womanhood of the world. Ah, to how many millions, then, are we debtors! And we women who have comforts and alleviations in sickness, who can command generous and skilled surgical or medical aid—we are debtors to all who suffer unrelieved, who groan unheeded, who die unpitied.

* * * * * *

"May CHRIST, the King of Glory, touch by His mighty power the hearts of his favoured daughters in Christian lands, that the debtors may all unite in one holy effort of prayer, giving, and going, and the debt to His daughters in India (Africa, China, and other lands) lovingly and ungrudgingly be paid, His kingdom be advanced, and His coming hastened!"

MISS S. S. HEWLETT.

CHAPTER XXII.

CHINA'S HOMES AND CHINA'S WOMEN.

"WILL you not tell me," asked an Indian missionary of an intelligent Hindoo, "which of our methods of working you fear the most?"

"Why should I put such a key into your hands, Sahib? And yet, I trust you, and I will. We do not fear your schools; our children need not go to them. We do not fear your preaching, for we need not listen. But we do fear your doctors, and we fear your women. Your women and your doctors make their way into our homes and hearts. We fear them most."

A fundamental truth lies here. Touch the heart, you move the life. Win the homes, you mould the people. Hence the supreme importance of woman's work the wide world over. For women can go to women with a sympathy and love that find their way through all barriers of ignorance, indifference, and superstition. And once the women won, it is a comparatively easy matter to influence the families.

"CHINA FOR CHRIST!" What does it mean but homes of China transformed by the love of JESUS?

And can this ever be, until the mothers, sisters, wives, have learned the sweetness and the power of His Name?

What are they like, these homes in China? Are they accessible? Do the women really need us? Can we do much to help them?

Would that some pen could make their sorrows live to Christian hearts that question thus. There are no homes in China, as we count homes. There is no happy fireside, no genial board, where father and mother gather the children round them, one family, free and alone. There is no cheery, social life embracing brother and sister alike, letting them grow up together, sharing the same interest, and mingling with one another's friends. There are no "marriages made in heaven" based upon mutual respect and love. There are no sacred ties of common faith and worship, uniting heart to heart in bonds eternal. Home in the deepest, truest sense is unknown among the heathen. And yet there are homes, countless thousands, in which millions of women spend their lives from infancy to old age, scarcely ever going beyond them—women with hearts like ours, needs like ours, and with the same capacity for blessedness in this world and the next, but women how dark, how helpless, how oppressed, with what unsatisfied longings, what dreary, suffering lives, and what hopeless deaths!

One-fifth of all the women in the world are found in these homes in China—a number so vast as to be almost inconceivable. One baby girl out of every

five is cradled in a Chinese mother's arms, unwelcomed and unloved unless by that poor mother's heart, born to a life too often ended ere it is well begun. One little maiden out of every five grows up in ignorance and neglect, drudging in the daily toil of some poor Chinese family, or crying over the pain of her crippled feet in the seclusion of a wealthier home. One young girl in every five questions life with wondering eyes from behind the paper windows of the women's courtyard of a Chinese dwelling. Amongst all the youthful brides who, day by day, pass from the shelter of their childhood's home, one out of every five goes weeping * in China, to the tyranny of a mother-in-law she dreads, and the indifference of a husband she has never seen. Of all the wives and mothers in the world one out of every five turns in her need and longing to a gilded goddess of mercy in some Chinese temple, counting her beads and murmuring her meaningless prayers in hope of help and blessing that never come. Of all the women who weep, one out of every five weeps alone, uncomforted, in China. Out of every five who lie upon beds of pain, one is wholly at the mercy of Chinese ignorance and superstition. One out of every five, at the close of earthly life, passes into the shadow and the terror that surround a Chinese grave,

* Chinese etiquette demands that the bride should appear most unwilling to be taken to her husband's home. Too often, however, her tears and reluctance are the result of real sorrow and fear.

never having heard of Him who alone can rob death of its sting. One-fifth of all the women in the world are waiting, waiting, in China, for the Saviour who so long has waited for them. What a burden of responsibility does this lay upon us—the women of Christendom!

For they can be reached. They are not hidden in zenanas. Though the aristocratic and upper middle

COUNTRY WOMEN, WASHING.

classes are a good deal kept out of sight, the women of the lower orders are comparatively free. They stand in the doors of their houses, gossip in the courtyards, carry their washing down to the ponds and streams, crowd the theatres and temples, and stop one in the streets. They are hospitable, friendly, talkative, quick-witted, intensely curious, and full of eager questions as to anything strange or new. Of

course they are afraid of us at first—and no wonder! Considering all the terrifying rumours they have heard about "foreign devils" from barbarous lands across the sea, and remembering, too, the strangeness of our manners and appearance, contrasted with their own, the marvel is they should so soon forget their fears, and welcome us as they do.

For they do welcome us. Love begets love in China as elsewhere. And some of us have never met with truer sympathy and kindness than from women far away in the heart of that great land.

The story of the Inland Mission could not be told without a section on Woman's Work for Woman; for by the grace of GOD the C. I. M. was not only used to open the earliest stations in the Interior, but for many years it was the only Mission that attempted to send ladies inland. In face of criticism, discouragement, isolation, and difficulties of every kind, its devoted workers were the first women to enter no less than nine of the inland provinces:—

GAN-HWUY,	KAN-SUH,	KWEI-CHAU,
SHAN-SI,	SI-CH'UEN,	HU-NAN,
SHEN-SI.	YUN-NAN.	HO-NAN.

To realise the need that constrained them to so unprecedented a course, in spite of native and foreign prejudice and their natural shrinking from the hardships involved, one must know something of the conditions of life among the women to whom they went, and therefore—breaking briefly into our historic sequence—I venture to insert the following glimpse of:—

China's Homes and China's Women.

A woman's life in China—what lies behind those words? A little lassie well-born in the "Flowery Land" will be probably called "Pure Filial Piety," "Fair Flower," "Delicate Perfume," "Secure Silver," or some such title, if she is thought worth naming at all. Many are considered too insignificant for any appellation beyond that of "big sister," "second sister," "third sister," and so forth, or simply "one," "two," "three." Before her feet are bound she romps merrily enough with her brothers, running about as freely as our little ones at home. At ten or twelve, custom confines her to the house, but while under her parents' roof she is often kindly treated, and may be taught to read and write, though, as a rule, a knowledge of household matters, needlework, and delicate embroidery is considered enough learning for her and her young companions, who are "only girls." But if education give them little, nature and art do much. Bright and attractive, they set off their olive complexions, dark eyes, and glossy black hair to advantage by brilliant garments, flowers, and trinkets in abundance. Spent in "the women's courtyard," their lives, though very different from those of their sisters in distant Christendom, are not wholly dark or dreary. Gleams of sunshine brighten almost every lot; and while health is good and fortune fair there may be a measure of happiness even under such unnatural conditions. Chinese mothers are fond of dressing up their children in showy colours, and seem to take pride and pleasure in them while they are quite young. Sometimes a link of love unites the wives and husbands, and parental affection is not uncommon, so that in her early days "Fair Flower" may enjoy comparative freedom and happiness in her father's home. But when this much is said, one has touched upon all the brighter side of life for her. And what remains?

The rest is a sad story.

Betrothed in babyhood, she is transferred in her teens to the authority of her mother-in-law, and married to a man of whom she knows nothing, and who has never seen or spoken to her before the wedding day. So much is this change dreaded that sometimes the girls of a family, or clan, will bind themselves together by the most solemn vows, to take opium or some other poison, within a certain time of their marriage, and so put an end to their lives, rather than endure the misery that the future might entail. And when it is remembered that every man in China who can pay the price of a wife is married, no matter how unattractive, deformed, or vicious he may be, this desperate decision does not seem so strange.

Should the bridegroom happen to be an eldest son, the girl's position is considered enviable. Her younger sisters-in-law have to bear the brunt of the hard work and worry of every day, while she takes her place as second in importance in the household. Should she become the mother of boys, she has attained the highest happiness open to her in life; but sad indeed is her condition if it be otherwise. To have no sons in China is considered a sufficient cause for divorce, and in any case a second wife will be taken.

Enclosed within high walls, the only access to a Chinese mansion is by the great, heavily barred gate that faces south. Within are rooms for the retainers, kitchens and offices upon the first courtyard; guest halls and apartments for the men upon those that follow; while away at the back, opening out of these, are dwellings set apart for the women. Dark rooms, sometimes handsomely furnished, but always dirty and forlorn, open from the court by curtained doors and papered windows that admit but little light and air. The ladies are often graceful and courteous, with an intelligent look, due to the lofty forehead, formed by pulling out the hair round the brow from the time of

marriage. Perfumed, painted, and robed in silk, their rich, dark tresses elaborately dressed, and glittering with jewelled pins and ornaments, they are gay enough outwardly, at times, even in the unattractive surroundings of their often dreary homes. Rarely, very rarely, may they go out; and when they do, it must be in covered chairs, closely screened from view.

The mother-in-law is the absolute head of such a household. One or more rooms are given to each young wife, but the meals are usually in common, and all the housekeeping is in the elder woman's hands. Husbands—good, bad, or indifferent—are practically of far less importance at home than this domestic despot. Indeed, in some parts of China the young women are not supposed to speak to their husbands at all during the first three years of married life. Home blessings, the sunshine of united hearts, sympathy, love, unselfishness, are unknown elements in such an existence. Feuds and jealousies, passion and strife, embitter every day; while ceaseless gossip and malicious slander banish all mutual respect and confidence. Painful narrow-mindedness, and the grossest ignorance and superstition flourish in these conditions. And never a breath of a purer air lifts the heart heavenward.

Nor is this all. Dreary and monotonous at the best, too often such lives are further shadowed by sorrows the result of cruel selfishness and sin. Frequently the men are gamblers, opium-smokers, and worse; and the fate of the women and children—entirely in their hands—may be of the saddest. It is not an uncommon thing for wealthy families to be brought to poverty and shame through the vices of husbands and fathers; and men are at liberty even to *sell* their wives and daughters to obtain money for opium, or to pay their gambling debts.

Picture it! Ponder it! Pray over it! And think—do they not need us?

Not only these, however. Girls and women of the poorer classes, with harder work, fewer comforts, and less protection from cruelty, oppression, and wrong, need, even more, the help and blessing we can bring.

Little daughters-in-law living like slaves in the homes of their future husbands, whose parents, too poor to care for them, have been obliged to let them go as children to the families that have bought them for their sons—oh, how they need the protection of a friend! Thousands of these poor children continually endure indescribable sufferings from the unrestrained violence of those who have legal right to do with them what they will. It is the commonest thing for such little sufferers to take poison, or jump down a well, to end their misery.

One case may serve as an example for very many. The child, a bonny little lass of eight, had been brought to her mother-in-law some three years before I knew her. The neighbours said that then she was plump and merry as a child could be. I saw her wan and wasted—silent, trembling, stupid with terror—and covered all over with scars of burns, cuts, and bruises, left by many a fit of passion vented upon her defenceless head. One bitterly cold autumn morning, drawn to the window by heart-rending cries, I saw her father-in-law, a tall, powerful man, who had dragged her out of the cottage without a scrap of clothing upon her poor shivering little frame, beating her violently with a branch from a thorn bush he had cut on purpose. Of course we interfered at once. But long ere this, that suffering little life has probably been sacrificed, as so many are in China, to persistent cruelty.

The awful fact that year by year in that dark land scores of thousands of women, oppressed beyond endurance, end their unhappy lives by suicide, speaks volumes in itself. Many such cases almost every missionary has witnessed;

but the large majority are never heard of, never known, except to the heart of GOD.

"*If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works?*"

By GOD's grace and in His strength we can deliver, many a time. And even where our presence and sympathy can bring no outward help, there is always the message of eternal freedom and blessedness for the soul.

Far away in the heart of China I had a friend. She was a fine, bright, intelligent young woman, with one little girl, and a wretched opium-smoking husband, who left her to earn her own living and support her child. She was in a situation in the city, and came often to the mission-house to hear the Gospel which she loved.

One hot July day I was suddenly called to an opium case. A woman had taken the poison; would we go at once? Hurriedly we followed the messenger outside the city, to an open temple by the highway, where a large crowd was gathered. There, unconscious on the floor, I found—my friend.

It was no time for questions; we did all that was possible, in spite of her strenuous resistance and pitiful pleadings to be allowed to die. After several hours she began to rally. And then, to our horror, we learned the following facts:—

Unexpectedly that morning her husband had arrived. He seemed strange, insisted upon her leaving her situation and coming home at once, bringing the little girl. Her alarm was exchanged for despair and desperation, when upon the road she learnt that he had *sold her* to pay his gambling debts,—sold her and her child to a man in a neighbouring city, to a life compared with which death were a boon.

But one resource is left. By the roadside is a little inn. They stop to rest. She is prepared, seizes her opportunity, and swallows enough opium to kill two. They continue the dreadful journey, but before long she cannot walk. Some hours later I found her in the wayside temple.

Had she not taken the poison, nothing could have rescued her from her dreadful fate. Had no missionary been there to save her life and arouse sympathy on her behalf, probably little would have been heard of the occurrence—only one tragedy more among so many! But as it was, the thing became known all over the town. Public feeling was strong. And the people themselves made a contribution to buy her back and rid her of her wretched husband. To our unspeakable joy this was done. She came to the hall, and we had reason to believe that she was saved, not for time only, but for eternity.

Of course there are very many cases of unutterable cruelty and wrong, in which we can do nothing but suffer with the oppressed, and cry to GOD to undertake their cause. Women are bought and sold in China every day, and become the helpless slaves of their legal owners, with no hope of deliverance but in the grave. That we can do so little in some directions should but urge us to neglect no service that is within our power.

One phase of painful distress we are fully able to alleviate. What the women of China suffer physically, none but those who have lived among them can ever know. Not only have they no doctors, properly so called, but the most elementary knowledge of nursing seems equally lacking, and comfort in sickness is a thing undreamed of. I have seen Chinese women speechless with amazement at the sympathy and kindness lavished upon an English mother at an inland station; seen them weep bitter, indignant tears to think of the neglect and hardships they themselves have to suffer in times of equal need. Medical missionaries, women as well

as men, are sorely wanted in every part of China, and may there find noble spheres of Christ-like service, rich in its reward.

A letter lies before me recently received from one such worker in central China, the only doctor in a region large as England and Wales put together.

"Yesterday," he writes, "I was called to a patient—a young woman—who had been suffering terribly for three days. It was the saddest case I ever saw in my life. Before now the poor young thing must have passed away, a victim to the gross ignorance of the people. She might have been saved had I been called only one day earlier. As it was, too late, I had to leave her to die. Think of it! And I have saved many a worse case at home. The experience was such a terrible one that, old and accustomed surgeon as I am, I have been quite upset by it ever since. As long as I live the memory of that scene will cling to me.

"I look forward thankfully, as I think of it, and of all the awful sum of preventable anguish around us here, to the time when we shall have a regularly established medical work in this neighbourhood.

"Oh—what the women of China suffer! Come as soon as you can, and bring them the Gospel. And let us do all we may to help them in other ways as well, while we have the opportunity."

Yes, they do need us; we can help them; and what is more, *we alone have the power*. Only women can go to these women in their dark and distant homes. Here and there the doctor may be called in a case of emergency, but we only are welcomed freely, as friends and sisters. None but women can sit down beside them; patiently, lovingly enter into all their

sorrows, and tenderly point them to JESUS, the one refuge for sinful and weary hearts.

Did not the Master include this great, suffering womanhood of China in the largeness of His love and pity when He said, carry the glad tidings "to every creature"? Did He not know that only *women* would be able to obey that part, at any rate, of His last command? And will He hold us guiltless if it be forgotten, disregarded, unfulfilled?

How have we—the women of Christendom—discharged this great obligation? What has been done, as yet, for China's homes and China's women? Something during recent years, but ah, how little compared to the overwhelming need! Utterly beyond the reach of present agencies, millions upon millions wait our tardy coming, never having had a chance of hearing of the Saviour of the world. Travel in the country, they flock to you from the villages; enter the city gates, they crowd around you in the towns. Old women bent with years, mothers burdened with little children, girls with their tiny crippled feet, all more or less hampered by the restraint of custom, and unable to go far from their homes to meet us; how can they ever hear the Message unless we bring it patiently within their reach? Thousands of them are passing day by day into the darkness of an unknown future, leaving millions upon millions more to whom no light can come unless we, who say that we are CHRIST'S, rise up in His strength to prove, by lives of love and

unquestioning obedience, that we are His indeed for any service, even unto "the uttermost part of the earth."

Sisters that dwell at ease midst blessings won for us at so great a price; mothers rejoicing in young lives, yours only to make the most of for GOD, and for the world; happy women of Christian lands, with all your culture, freedom, faith, your capacities for devotion, sympathy, patience, love—would that to you the cry might come from these far-distant homes and hearts oppressed: "We grope amid the shadows, and can find no light; we sink beneath the burdens of our weary way, no love to pity, no voice to cheer, no hand to help; we suffer, sin, and weep, and there is none to wipe our tears away; we know not what to teach our little children; we know not how to meet the terrors of the tomb; alone, we die in the darkness, drifting,—whither we cannot tell! Oh, if there be a Saviour, if you have any message of healing, hope, or rest, in mercy, in compassion—

COME TO US!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THEN AND NOW.

A RETROSPECT AND SURVEY.

AMONG the most striking characteristics of our day is the great acceleration of missionary enterprise on all hands.

"'The first fifty years of this century,' says Mr. Gladstone, 'marked more progress than the previous five thousand in art, science, invention, and discovery; the next twenty-five more than the previous fifty; and the next ten more than the previous twenty-five.'

"Probably the statement is not an exaggeration. GOD never sounded a louder signal gun than now, and no combination of events ever startled the attentive observer like the present. William Carey led the way in the organisation of the church for modern missions in 1792. In rapid succession followed the organisation of the great missionary societies, and the sending forth of missionaries, till now between two and three hundred societies are represented by six thousand labourers."*

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* *The Divine Enterprise of Missions*, p. 287. A. T. Pierson, D.D.

Fifty years ago, at the Treaty of Nan-king in 1842, China began to open to the Gospel. The little handful of Protestant missionaries, then hampered and restricted in their efforts at Canton, have been replaced by more than fifteen hundred workers, scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land. Similar progress may be noticed in almost every sphere of missionary labour; for GOD is moving on, and His purpose clearly is the evangelisation of the world, before the rapidly nearing close of this dispensation.

Among the most important developments of this march of modern missions has been the rapid growth of woman's work for women the wide world over. The dawn of this century saw the devoted Elizabeth Fry consecrating her all to Christ-like labours on behalf of a degraded womanhood. She has been followed by a great host of noble women, who in varied spheres have given themselves to the service of their generation. Before their faith, prayers, and patient, skilful labours, what mountains of difficulty have become a way, what gates of brass have been cut asunder, what apparent impossibilities have been turned into victorious proofs of the miracle-working power of GOD!

About the time that Florence Nightingale, amid the horrors of the Crimean war, was patiently working out her awful problems, opening a pathway of usefulness and devotion which thousands of women have since followed among the sick and suffering in every

rank of life; about the time that Mrs. Ranyard, moved with Divine compassion for the poor and ignorant of our great cities, was organising and developing that noble Bible Women's agency now so widely at work for their evangelisation, other women, less known, but no less devoted, were spending their lives in similar service, pioneers in far-distant lands, shrouded with the gloom of heathenism. Their difficulties and successes cannot but be full of interest to us who in later days have entered into their labours. They patiently toiled and suffered through long years to make a way by which, now, we may have free access to millions upon millions of women they could never reach. If their responsibility was great, and led them to give up all, laying down life itself in obedience to the Lord's command, how much greater is ours in these last days, when the whole world is open to our efforts, and we are indeed without excuse!

The development has been rapid. Only since the middle of this century have Christian women been able to go freely to the women of heathendom. Little more than fifty years ago India and China were completely closed against this form of missionary effort. To-day openings abound, and the cry on all hands is for more labourers. In 1852 Mrs. Elizabeth Sale began her village work in India, which led a few years later to the development of Zenana missions, the light of India's "shut in" womanhood. During the same decade, decided

advance was made towards the evangelisation of the women of China, when the first unmarried lady missionaries were sent out as an experiment.

Protestant missions in the Empire of the East were still in their initial stages. No foothold even for men had been granted before 1842. The country was not nominally open until 1860. And up to the Chefoo Convention, in the autumn of 1876, the interior was practically inaccessible. General work being so restricted, it is needless to say that efforts for women were even more hampered. From the first, brave and devoted missionary wives had accompanied their husbands to this difficult sphere, and their patient self-denying labours had been fruitful. Before the middle of the century no fewer than seven such had been laid to rest in Chinese graves. They were able to accomplish much, directly and indirectly, but none felt more keenly than they the need of reinforcements of younger unmarried women who, free from home duties, might give themselves entirely to the work.

But could such go to China? The customs and prejudices of the people were all against it. How would they find homes? How would they be protected in great heathen cities? How would they reach the people? And besides, where were the parents who would be willing to let their daughters face such dangers, unmarried and alone? The need for their help was evident and pressing. Married ladies with the care of settled stations could not possibly undertake

the work ; and unless single women could be found, able and willing to consecrate themselves to it, the whole evangelisation of China must be retarded, for "the surest and speediest way to Christianise a people is to convert and educate their women."

To an American Mission belongs the honour of having been first to recognise and endeavour to meet this need,* when in 1850 the American Protestant Episcopalians sent Miss L. M. Fay to Shanghai. The Berlin Foundling Hospital in Hong-kong followed this bold example, and many devoted German workers came out. In 1859 the American Methodist Episcopal Mission added to their representatives at Foo-chow two sisters whose names have since become widely known and honoured throughout missionary circles—the Misses B. and S. H. Woolston. In 1866 the Presbyterians and Baptists followed, the latter sending Miss A. M. Field to Swatow, where she has since rendered invaluable service. But up to that time the larger English Societies had scarcely begun to enrol unmarried ladies among their representatives in China.

In 1866, when the *Lammermuir*, outward bound, was bearing the first party of the Inland Mission to Shanghai, there were, all told in China, only fourteen

* Individual effort there had been. As early as 1844 Miss Aldersey, an English lady settled in Ningpo, was working on her own account among the women. But up to this time, as far as we can tell, no Society had attempted to send out unmarried ladies.

unmarried lady missionaries. Seven of these were in Hong-kong, and the little handful on the mainland were scattered in six of the principal coast cities; while a hundred and fifty millions of women in the vast Interior were still utterly unreached, "having no hope, and without GOD in the world." But on board that outward-bound ship, numbered in the first party of the Inland Mission, was a little band of sisters—two married ladies, and with them six young, earnest workers—going out to consecrate their lives to the women of China. GOD speed them as they travel eastward! Hard has been the parting from home, and loved ones; difficult is the pioneer work that lies ahead; but four, at least, of their number shall live to see brighter days dawn for China, and wonderful advance in the evangelisation in which they have come to take part.

Now mark the change. Only ten years, and the number has increased nearly fivefold! The first General Conference of Protestant missionaries in Shanghai, May 1877, represented a company of three to four hundred missionaries, including no fewer than sixty-two lady workers, not counting missionaries' wives—the number having risen from fourteen to sixty-two within the decade. How great and cheering such an advance; yet how utterly inadequate! The Conference urgently appealed for labourers, women as well as men—"devoted women to penetrate the homes of the people." What were sixty-two such workers among as many millions of women, with still as many millions

more living beyond their possible reach? Eight months before, that untouched Interior had been practically thrown open to Heralds of the Cross by the signing of the Chefoo Convention. Since then pioneer bands of *men* had penetrated far into its darkness with the Light of Life. Already they were travelling through the nine provinces still without any resident missionary, and multitudes wherever they went thronged to hear their message. But what about the women? They could not learn from men. Unless women preachers could come to them they must be left unreached.

And there were women with hearts full of love, who, from their settled stations in the seaboard provinces, looked out over the far-reaching country, and longed to be the first to go and seek those sister-souls.

China was opening, why should not her women be blessed? Yet, far away across the populous land, hundreds and hundreds of miles to distant Mongolia, Burmah and Thibet, in countless thousands of cities, villages, and homes, millions of women were waiting, to whom no one had ever attempted to carry the message of GOD'S love. No women-evangelists had traversed those rivers teeming with human life, or trodden those fruitful plains crowded with homesteads and dotted with towns and cities. No dweller in all those far, fair regions had ever looked into the eyes of a Christian sister, or heard the name of JESUS.

When would missionary workers go to them?

For the present there seemed no way. Custom and

prejudice were all against it. And even the opinion of fellow-missionaries was not favourable, as a rule.

As late as 1877 a remarkable document was issued by the Government Foreign Office at Pekin, utterly condemning woman's work. The missionary question, as a whole, had come up for consideration, and several suggestions were made as to the *modus operandi* to be pursued. Among other desired modifications was this, that "in order to exhibit the reserve and strict propriety of Christianity, no Chinese female should enter the chapels nor foreign women propagate the doctrines." Thus it was actually proposed to stop all work for the women of the country; and public feeling being strongly in favour of the suggestion, lady missionaries had to keep out of sight as much as possible for some time.

Only twenty years ago! Well might the burdened heart, longing after those unreached millions, sadly exclaim, in this connection also, "*Oh, Rock, Rock! when wilt thou open?*"

But it is open now. Go, travel, see! The women as well as men of China are ready to receive the Gospel. Out of its fifteen hundred Protestant missionaries fully half are women, and at least a fourth, unmarried women, whose whole lives are absorbed in the work.

How did it come about? Who were the first to go to the far Interior? What success had they? What difficulties? What reception?

In the next chapter we shall see.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FIRST WOMEN WHO WENT WEST.

THE first woman who went was a mother. Thirteen thousand miles away across the ocean her husband and children in the home-land followed with love and prayers her distant journey and the founding of the Orphanage she had gone to start, as much convinced as she that GOD had called her to this special work.

It was the terrible famine time of 1878. Tidings of the distress in SHAN-SI had reached Shanghai, and relief work had been started before Mr. Hudson Taylor left for England at the end of the year. For more than twelve months half the globe had been between him and home, and although his wife had cheerfully spared him for the work's sake, it was with an often longing heart. But now reunion was at hand. On board the mail steamer passengers and crew alike were eager to reach Europe in time for Christmas. No expense was spared. Extra coal was piled on engine fires. And in the middle of December a speedy voyage terminated at Marseilles.

Then followed days of happy work in the old

home-circle, destined ere long, however, to be strangely interrupted. Terrible tidings began to reach Pyrland Road week by week of the alarming proportions assumed by the famine in northern China. Clearly this was no ordinary time of scarcity such as frequently arises from drought or flood in various parts of the land. Now whole provinces were being rapidly depopulated. Millions had died already. Millions more were on the verge of starvation. Ghastly horrors were reported of deserted villages where the dead lay unburied; of wives and children sold away or deserted; of fever-stricken cities, outside whose walls huge pits were dug to receive the uncoffined bodies of numberless daily victims. What could be done to succour the distressed, and make the most of the openings that abounded for the Gospel?

Up to this time SHAN-SI had been one of the nine unoccupied inland provinces in which missionary work was scarcely yet begun. No foreign lady had ever been seen within its borders, nor in any of the vast regions to south and west of it. For men-evangelists to penetrate these districts was not easy, but for women to attempt it had been considered impossible. Now, however, in SHAN-SI, at any rate old barriers were broken down, and the sufferers seemed ready to respond to any touch of sympathy. Hundreds of orphan children were dying, day by day, or being sold and taken south, to a life of shame. Ladies were unspeakably needed to come and gather these poor little ones into Christian schools, and seize

the opportunity of gaining access to the women in their desolate homes, no longer closed against the Gospel.

But who could be spared for this responsible undertaking? All the China Inland Mission staff seemed absolutely needed in their own important spheres. Doors that had cost long toil to open could not be left to close again; young converts in the older stations could not be abandoned by those who had gathered them in. And yet none but an experienced missionary would do for this difficult work in SHAN-SI. The problem was pressing, and hard of solution.

And so it came about that one morning, early in the New Year, Mrs. Hudson Taylor was startled by the unexpected suggestion from her husband's lips,—

"Could not *you* go?"

"Impossible!" was her immediate rejoinder. And the conversation ceased.

But the suggestion would not be dismissed. The wife's heart well knew what it must have meant to him who made it, and, coming from such a source, the words had serious weight. He would never have said such a thing if he had not meant it. *Could* it be that the thought was of GOD?

Her husband was ready to spare her; but after the loneliness of their long separation, to be parted again so soon; to leave him when he was far from strong, and seemed so much to need her help and sympathy, surely this could not be right? And then the

children—the lads at school; the little ones in the nursery, full of funny prattle, charming ways, and baby-loveliness that never come again—how could she part from them to go to that terrible, fever-stricken, famine district, which had already cost missionary lives, and was likely to cost more? She was ready with her whole soul to "seek first the Kingdom," but could such a step be of GOD?

And yet if she did not volunteer, who would go forward? There were young candidates ready to sail for China; but where was the woman with her knowledge of the language, and familiarity with the people, who could be the pioneer of such work in SHAN-SI? She said nothing, but thought much, and waited upon GOD for guidance.

One thing was very clear—the care of her children is a mother's first work for GOD. And Mrs. Taylor's heart was filled with joy and thankfulness as she realised that unless they were suitably provided for it could not be her duty to go. If this call were of the LORD she should certainly see His hand opening the way by providing care for the little ones that would satisfy His heart as well as her own. For the present this seemed impossible. And the mother's questionings were set at rest by the assurance that unless the LORD thus set her free, she might remain at home, and know it was not in selfishness or rebellion; and that if He did so provide, husband and children would be better cared for than by her presence with them. It would be safe to leave them

if He said go, and safe to trust Him about the strange, new path.

One unsuccessful attempt to get the children mothered, and then Mrs. Taylor felt that there was no more for her to do. If GOD wanted her in China *He* would work. And in a few days He did; so that Mrs. Taylor wonderingly saw her family provided for, unasked, in the very way she would have most desired. Now she knew certainly that her husband's thought had been of GOD; and at once her going was spoken of and preparations commenced.

Still some much-valued friends questioned the wisdom of the step, and Mrs. Taylor felt, for their sakes as well as for her own, the need of further confirmation. She thought much of Gideon, often feeling, like him, very unfit for the grave responsibilities to be assumed. It strengthened her to notice how gently the LORD had led him on from step to step, until his faith was ready for whatever obedience might involve. And, remembering Gideon's fleece, she too was led to seek from GOD a sign that this strange step was indeed His ordering, something that in times of trial and weakness, sure to come, she might recall for her encouragement.

Her prayer was twofold. She asked the LORD graciously to confirm His guidance by sending her a sufficient sum to meet the expenses of a small outfit, and also to add a special gift of fifty pounds—neither more nor less, but exactly fifty—to be appropriated to another purpose.

More willing to give and to guide than we can be to follow, the LORD did not long keep His child waiting. That very day a gentleman called at Pyrland Road, asking for Mrs. Taylor; and after some little conversation, inquired whether it were really a fact that she intended starting shortly for China. Upon being told that she was preparing to do so unless the LORD hindered, he took from his purse a cheque, which he said he had brought towards any necessary expenses of outfit, and that he would like it to be reserved exclusively for that purpose. The amount thus provided was exactly the sum usually given by the Mission for the outfit of candidates. With an expectant heart she waited, still saying nothing of her other special prayer. Half a week later the morning post brought a letter containing a cheque for fifty pounds, with permission to appropriate it to the very purpose for which it had been asked of GOD.

More than this, on the very day that Mrs. Taylor sailed for the far East, further encouragement was given. While the farewell Communion service was going on, a donation of one thousand pounds reached Pyrland Road, for work among the famine sufferers.

"Please enter it anonymously," was the request. "It does not represent any superabundance of wealth, as my business affairs will miss it. But if you, for CHRIST'S sake, can separate, I cannot give less than this."

Several new workers accompanied Mrs. Taylor to

China, the provision for whose going was little less remarkable than that made for her own.

Reinforcements had been badly needed on the field; and early in the New Year several candidates were accepted to sail in the next out-going party. But funds for passage and outfit were not forthcoming, and it seemed as though their departure might have to be put off until the autumn. Urgent letters, however, continually pleaded for more workers, and in the end of March Mr. Hudson Taylor was constrained to pray for very definite guidance. He told the waiting volunteers of the difficulty, and asked them to look to GOD for supplies, if it were His will for them to go at that time. Prayer was also requested for the general funds of the Mission. Large sums had been poured in for famine relief, but other supplies were low.

On Tuesday, April 2nd, the Council was to meet at Pyrland Road, when the question of the out-going party would have to be decided. At the previous Saturday afternoon prayer-meeting, a friend not often present, and who knew nothing of the special circumstances above mentioned, was led to pray, with marked emphasis, for just the help and guidance needed. As encouraging as it was unexpected, this prayer did much to assure those present that the LORD'S answer was near at hand.

The day for the Council meeting arrived, but meanwhile GOD had not failed to fulfil the expectation of His people. Two donations, received on Monday, had strengthened their faith, and a third, arriving on Tuesday morning, caused great joy and thanksgiving. The first of these was only six postage stamps, sent anonymously, from "a believer," but it told of a love that had done what it could. The second brought the larger sum of fifty pounds, with sympathy and cheering words from an Irish friend. And the third ran thus: "As you are receiving so marked an

answer to your prayers, in the number of workers volunteering to go out in connection with the Mission, we feel we cannot do better than send you some additional pecuniary help this year. I have therefore much pleasure in enclosing a cheque for five hundred pounds."

In the evening the Council assembled. But before they had been able to commence proceedings Mr. Taylor was called out to see a gentleman who had come to say that a donation of one hundred pounds was being sent from Scotland, expressly for extension work, and to increase the number of labourers in China.

"Thus," wrote Mr. Taylor, "before we were able even to consider the matter, England, Ireland, and Scotland had all sent in their response to the prayers that had ascended to the Throne of Grace."

These four donations exceeded six hundred and fifty pounds. The need was met. And, after providing for a sufficient remittance to China, enough remained to cover the passage and outfit of a large party.

Thus provided for and guided, Mrs. Taylor and her fellow-travellers set sail from London on the second of May, followed by the warmest prayers of many of the LORD'S people.

Upon arriving in China, in the early summer, the younger members of the party soon found themselves in suitable surroundings for the prosecution of their first work, the study of the language; but for Mrs. Taylor the question of how to begin operations was not quite so easily settled. To gather as many as possible of the destitute children, and seek to get amongst the women of the famine region, was the purpose kept in view, but it was some time before any suitable way seemed to open. Of course the tempter

came with frequent suggestions of discouragement, and many friends were ready to question the possibility or wisdom of such an effort.

"But all along," she wrote, "I was thankful to be able to look back with confidence, and say, 'GOD provided the means to save the orphans, and so clearly guided to my coming out for this work, that I am sure He has some plan in view. I will wait and see.'"

Mr. Turner was communicated with about openings in SHAN-SI, but replies seemed slow in coming; for while he was travelling from place to place distributing relief throughout his large district, the mails lay untouched at T'ai-yuen. The long, hot summer was hardly over, however, before letters arrived from him and Mr. Richard, saying that the news of Mrs. Taylor's coming had been an answer to many prayers; that there were now, all around them, such openings for winning the hearts of the people as might never occur again; and that they would give the warmest welcome to any reinforcements.

Mrs. Taylor, Miss Horne, and Miss Crickmay—both of whom had already been in China for about two years—started at once for T'ien-tsin, in the experienced escort of Mr. Baller. From this point a long and difficult journey lay before them, through a region never previously traversed by foreign ladies. The country was barren and desolate, bearing many traces of the sufferings of the famine time. The villages and towns were peculiarly lifeless, with a

significant absence of children and old people, as well as of dogs, fowls, and other common homestead occupants. No babies were to be seen anywhere, nor any little children—a pathetic indication of the awful crisis through which the people had just passed.

The chilly autumn evening of the last day of their journey had deepened into dusk, when, just as the city gates were closing, the weary travellers reached T'ai-yuen. Thus on Wednesday, October 23rd, 1878, the capital of SHAN-SI was entered by missionary women, the first to penetrate so far into the darkness of inland China.

When the tidings reached England, a few weeks later, Mr. Hudson Taylor wrote, with deepest thankfulness :—

"None but those who know what it is to pray and wait and watch for months, it may be years, for the opening of hearts closed against CHRIST, or of doors long shut to the Gospel, can fully understand the joy with which we have watched openings made in province after province, first for itinerant work, and then for more localised efforts. And if such has been our joy as brethren have been enabled to go so far inland, with what grateful hearts to GOD do we record the safe arrival of our first party of missionary *sisters* at the capital of one of the nine hitherto unevangelised provinces!"

It was indeed a great step in advance; and a bright prophecy for the future.

Soon after Mrs. Taylor's arrival at T'ai-yuen, Mr.

James, who had left a year before, returned with his bride. They were quickly followed by Mr. and Mrs. Richard; and as the winter came on quite a considerable staff occupied the three mission-houses in the city. Relief work was still needed, though the worst of the famine was mercifully past, and the ladies soon began to be very busy among the women and children. Sewing classes were started, giving employment to women in distress, and thus relieving many, whilst regularly bringing them under the influence of the Gospel. Visiting the homes of those thus reached gave access to numbers of houses in the city, and gradually won the confidence of a large circle.

Suitable premises being secured, the Orphanage was commenced, and a number of destitute little girls were gathered within its kindly shelter. The condition of these unfortunate children, when first brought to the missionaries, may be better imagined than described. Covered with sores, their poor little starved bodies were wasted to skin and bone; in some cases their filthy rags had to be actually soaked off before they could be got rid of! The work, though often repulsive, was repaid by the rapid improvement of the children's health and appearance. Most of them, in a very little while, became changed almost beyond recognition, and not one died.

Such was the state of the district, however, that comparatively few children were obtainable. Not that the people were unwilling to bring them, but

simply that there were none to bring. During the awful famine months the majority of little girls had either perished from starvation, or had been sold by their distracted parents and taken south. The scarcity of children remaining in the capital was pitifully apparent. Mrs. Taylor, during the whole period of her stay of five or six months, positively saw only one little baby.

From that day to this woman's work in SHAN-SI has gone on growing in usefulness and blessing. Miss Horne and Miss Crickmay laboured there for some years, and have been followed by a large band of devoted sisters, some of whom, alone, at their own stations, have been used of GOD to build up large and prosperous native churches.

Mrs. Taylor never regretted her pioneer journey to inland China, with all that it involved. Her life was spared, and about a year later husband and wife met again in the Empire of the East. He had been seriously ill after her sailing, and again on the way out. "You will never live to reach China," the Singapore doctor told him. But he did live; and they were reunited. Three of the children she left behind her in England are labouring to-day in connection with the China Inland Mission, two of them with children of their own, as sweet as those the mother trusted that summer to GOD'S care.

CHAPTER XXV.

A FIVE YEARS' STORY.

1878—1883.

THE departure of Mrs. Hudson Taylor for China, in the spring of 1878, called forth much sympathy at home. Thoughtful attention was drawn in many Christian circles to the women of that great country, and in the providence of GOD the worker was at hand who could take this deepened interest, and turn it to account.

A week before Mrs. Taylor sailed, Mr. McCarthy reached home after his walk across China, with a heart burdened by the condition of the women he had seen in the far west, longing to tell their needs, and help to heal their woes. Deeply convinced of the responsibility resting on Christian women to carry and send the Gospel to their sisters in every land, he largely devoted himself to the work of rousing the conscience of the Church upon this supremely important subject. Many hearts were stirred. Little companies began to unite for prayer; and soon after Mrs. Taylor left England, a ladies' "Prayer Union" was formed, specially to seek blessing

upon the women of inland China. Circulars were sent out, meetings held quarterly in the members' houses, missionary addresses were given, and hundreds joined. Several were thus led to devote themselves to the work, two sisters of Miss Boyd, the Secretary, sailing in the autumn of the year, for China. Definite prayer was made that missionary women might be enabled to go inland, and from that time decided advance is noticeable in this direction. At first, however, the very idea had to be mentioned with utmost caution, lest the Consular authorities, hearing of the proposal, should interfere with its accomplishment.

Meanwhile, KAN-SUH and SHEN-SI had no worker among five millions of women. Far away in this distant north, Mr. Easton was toiling and travelling alone, living in inns, unable to settle anywhere, patiently scattering the good seed, and holding on till brighter times should come. His companion, Mr. George King, had come down to the coast, reluctantly leaving the brave pioneer single-handed.

In beautiful SI-CH'UEN, far west up the mighty Yang-tsi, ten millions of women had no missionary. Our brethren, J. H. Riley and S. S. Clarke, were holding the fort alone at Ch'ung-k'ing,—the only station in that vast and populous province, larger in area than Austria and Switzerland put together. Mr. George Nicoll had come down to the coast early in the year for much-needed rest and change, his heart burdened with the needs of the women of the west—so accessible, so dark, so needy, all unreached.

Farther south, YUN-NAN and KWEI-CHAU had again four millions of women with no one to bring them the Light of Life. One lonely missionary, Mr. Broumton at Kwei-yang, was living at the only station in these two provinces, as large as Norway and Sweden put together. He had had visits from several colleagues on itinerating journeys—amongst others from Mr. George Clarke, who had penetrated as far as KWANG-SI—but at this time he was the only evangelist in those vast regions, and could do nothing to reach the women.

HU-NAN and KWANG-SI, equal to Italy and Portugal in size, with a population of twenty-three millions, had no Protestant worker at all, as they have none to-day! And HO-NAN, north of the Yang-tsi, more than twice as large as Ireland, was without any lady-evangelist among its seven millions of women.

Three times as large as the German Empire, these eight vast inland provinces contained almost thirty millions of women, none of whom had ever heard from a sister's lips the story of the love of JESUS. No wonder there were thought and prayer about sending workers to these regions. No wonder there were women in the missionary band, ready and longing to go as soon as a way should open.

Amongst the missionary party residing at Yang-chau was one who, though only a short time in the country, had endeared herself to all who knew her by her bright earnestness, warm-hearted affection,

spirituality, and entire devotion to the work. Early in the summer of 1879 she was united in marriage to Mr. George King, who had recently come down from KAN-SUH; and when the hot suns of August rose upon the great mid-China plains, Emily Snow found herself as Emily King, at Hankow, with a three or four months' journey up the broad Han before her, to her husband's distant sphere. No European woman had ever been seen in any of the towns and cities that border this mighty river. Great had been the crowds and excitement attending the first men-missionaries who had travelled that way. What would happen if a lady were known to be passing there? And then, at the end of the journey, where should she find a home? So far it had been impossible to secure a house in Ts'in-chau, where the missionaries hoped to make their headquarters. Rough accommodation in native inns was all the strangers could count upon, and that might be refused them or withdrawn at any time. Brave must be the young bride who would dare to face such difficulties, and strong the husband's faith that would not shrink, on her account, from such a lot! And yet with all the courage and the faith, there must have been moments when the heart almost failed at the prospect of that first journey.

A little boat was chosen from amongst the crowded shipping at the juncture of the Han and Yang-tsi, all arrangements were carefully made, and then came the long parting from the missionary friends re-

maining at Hankow—the base of supplies, the last point of contact with the outside world.

Thus they set their faces northward, hundreds and hundreds of miles of unbroken heathenism stretching away before them. Weeks and months must pass, changing summer suns for wintry blasts, ere they could reach their journey's end. And then, they have no home to go to, and only one Christian friend to bid them welcome—like themselves a pilgrim-stranger, homeless in a heathen land.

What is the secret of their untroubled confidence and peace?

"The LORD go with you," said a friend, bidding them farewell at Hankow.

"Yes," replied the young wife brightly; "with us, surely! And He has gone before."

Strong in this assurance they went forward. And He had gone before. In the early autumn, after three months' travelling, the great city of Han-chung, the most important centre on their route, was reached. Winter, in that region always severe, was coming on, and Mr. King felt it would be wise to break the journey. Of course it seemed most unlikely that premises would be obtainable, and yet he could but try. Negotiations were soon in progress; but just as matters appeared hopeful the mandarin sent round to warn the landlord against renting to these foreigners, as they had not reported themselves at the Ya-mun, and nobody knew who or what they might be. Mr. King soon explained, asking to be allowed

to remain for a time; and the Ya-mun dignitary, discovering that the foreigner was an old acquaintance, readily granted the necessary permit, and became kind and friendly. Filled with thankfulness and much encouraged, the missionaries settled down in this important sphere. The house was large and convenient, with a room in front capable of holding two hundred. They purposed remaining for the winter only, and then going on to KAN-SUH, but it soon became impossible to leave the growing work. Women flocked to Mrs. King's meetings, and day by day her husband was as busy as could be among the men.

In the spring Mr. Easton came down from KAN-SUH to visit the new station.

"GOD has been very good to us," he wrote, "and we feel most thankful for such a suitable place as we have in this important city. The work goes on amazingly. . . . Men come in crowds to hear the preaching, and the sick flock to Mr. King for medicines. The rescue of opium suicides is of almost daily occurrence. Yesterday—Sunday—we had public worship in the little courtyard, when about one hundred attended, nearly half of them women.

"Mr. King has already had the joy of baptising one man here, the firstfruits of SHEN-SI."

Thus was the great city of Han-chung opened to the Gospel, and an entrance won for women to the second of the nine unreached inland provinces—Mrs. Hudson Taylor and her young companions in neighbouring SHAN-SI having been the earliest pioneers.

It was a brave venture, that first journey to Han-chung, but what shall we say of the attempts and successes that followed? Their story is one to shame our shrinking faith and little devotion in the service of the LORD we profess to love.

Reinforcements were needed. Mrs. King, alone and overwhelmed with work, was in danger of breaking down. But no married couple could be spared to go to the new station. Who would brave the dangers of that three months' journey, and be the next to carry the Gospel to the women of the far north-west?

Four years before that time, a lady of independent means, Miss Elizabeth Wilson, of Kendal, had come out to China, at her own charges, in connection with the Inland Mission. Already well past middle life, it would have been only natural if she had chosen some comparatively easy sphere at the coast, where a measure of home comforts and surroundings might have been secured. But such was not her spirit. Courageous, earnest, devoted, wherever the need was greatest there would this woman go. Help was wanted at Han-chung. Willingly relinquishing her own sphere, in and around Hankow, she was the first to volunteer for the post. With one young companion—Miss Faussett, now Mrs. Samuel Clarke, of KWEI-YANG—this brave lady set out upon the long and difficult journey, desiring no escort but that of two native Christian servants. Starting in the end of February 1880, they reached their destination three months later, on the twenty-first of May.

It was a noble forward movement, eclipsing all that had hitherto been attempted, and proved conclusively the startling fact that women, strong in faith, might, alone and unaided, successfully penetrate remotest inland China with the Gospel. Many similar journeys have been made since then; but this was the first, and the most remarkable, considering the age and inexperience of the travellers, and the difficulties through which they were brought in perfect safety.

Twelve months after the ladies reached Han-chung a dark cloud of sorrow and bereavement overshadowed the missionary home in that distant inland city. The work had been manifestly prospered, and all seemed to promise future blessing. In the middle of April 1881 Mrs. King wrote:—

"Our little son is four months old to-day. He is a great attraction and wonder to the Chinese, who cannot understand his being so white. Mr. King gets grand opportunities of preaching. Lately he baptised two more men and a woman. Eighteen women have been baptised in all, and how many men I cannot exactly tell.

"The LORD is with us. He will never forsake those who put their trust in Him." Adding in a postscript—"'The LORD is risen indeed.'"

Less than a month later, the young wife was called from earth to heaven, leaving her little one motherless, and the husband from whom she had never once been parted, desolate and alone. How sore his need, in that great darkness, of the Presence of which she

wrote! Typhoid fever had done its deadly work, and the first missionary grave hallowed the soil of SHEN-SI.

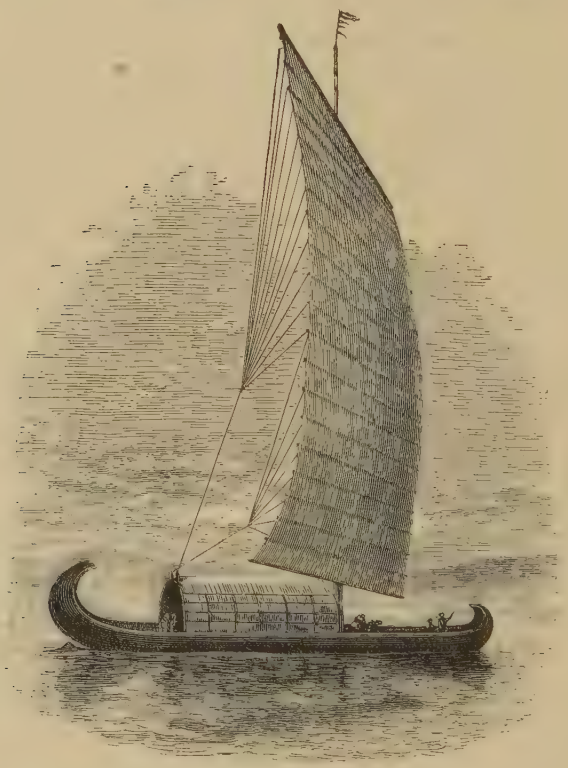
Others filled up the ranks. Many a noble woman followed to carry on the task her hands laid down. SHEN-SI and KAN-SUH have claimed no small share of the love and toil of C.I.M. evangelists, whose record is above, known fully to God alone. But the devoted Emily King was privileged to be the first to lay down her life for the women of that great region, as she had been pioneer in bringing them the Glad Tidings of great joy.

* * * * * *

A bright September day in 1879, one month after the departure of Mr. and Mrs. King for the north, witnessed the double wedding, in the cathedral at Shanghai, of Mr. George Nicoll, from SI-CH'UEN, to Miss Howland, then only six months in China; and Mr. George Clarke to Mademoiselle Rosier, a Swiss lady, who had come out with Mrs. Hudson Taylor little more than a year before. Mr. Nicoll was returning to Ch'ung-k'ing, and Mr. Clarke to Kwei-yang, capital of distant KWEI-CHAU—and, of course, the ladies were to go with them.

It was a long and dangerous journey. Few foreigners had ever penetrated so far to west and south, and never any women. Their route lay up the Yang-tsi to Hankow; thence by native boat to I-ch'ang, an important mart three hundred and fifty

miles farther west; there a SI-CH'UEN junk would have to be obtained for the Yang-tsi rapids and the further journey to Ch'ung-k'ing, in which city Mr. and Mrs.



A SI-CH'UEN JUNK.

Nicoll would be at home. Not so the Clarkes, however. Another month's travelling lay before them, due south, to Kwei-yang, capital of the neighbouring province of KWEI-CHAU. And from the time the

pilgrims left Hankow—during all the four months of their journey—they would only pass two mission stations, one in each of these vast provinces, among whose thronging cities, myriad homes, and needy hearts no Christian woman's influence had ever yet been known.

Preparations were carefully made for this difficult undertaking, but little was said about it, for fear of hindrance from official quarters. In the end of October the travellers set out, and a month later they were ready to leave I-ch'ang. Here, early in December, came the final parting from friends and colleagues—the real venture of faith—as they turned their faces westward. Winter had set in. Mornings and nights were bitterly cold on the wide, bleak river. In their roomy junk (divided into three compartments, and a place for the boatman's family) they extemporised a cooking stove, and settled down to make the best of circumstances—glad to be travelling together as far as to Ch'ung-k'ing. . . . Through the impressive grandeur of the Yang-tsi gorges they moved by slow degrees, the great river rushing at a fearful pace over its numerous, terrible rapids, and majestic mountains rising on either side, whose rock-hewn walls towered, sometimes, a thousand feet above the foaming torrent. At night the windows of the boat had to be carefully closed with wooden shutters to conceal the foreign ladies, for fear of crowds and excitement—inevitable had they been seen. If they could only reach their destinations

quietly all would be well, but disturbances *en route* might have proved a serious hindrance, spreading rumours ahead.

Christmas was near before the rapids were passed. Many a danger had been safely met and conquered, and the worst seemed over, when suddenly one early morning out in the open stream the boat struck a hidden rock, and began to fill with water.

"Ashore! Ashore! as quickly as possible!" rang out the startled cry.

The women were landed, and left to watch the goods rescued from the quickly sinking junk. In addition to ordinary luggage, bedding, stores, etc., eleven boxes of books belonging to the Bible Society were on board, and as they filled with water were exceedingly heavy and difficult to move. Tents had to be rigged up on the bank; and for a week the forlorn little party camped out as best they might, in cold, discomfort, and weariness, under their poor shelter. Daylight hours were spent in drying their dripping belongings, and trying to save the books from utter ruin; and at night they had to sleep under umbrellas in the wind and rain. A poor way to keep Christmas! But they made the best of it, singing the old home hymns, and enjoying a capital pudding, contrived by Mrs. Nicoll in spite of circumstances. By degrees the wreck was raised, repaired, and rendered habitable, and on December 29th they re-embarked, thankful to have lost nothing, and experienced no ill-effects from cold and exposure.

ONE OF THE YANG-TSI GORGES.

Surely, now, all would go well?

Within a few hours a rope broke in the strain of the current. The mast snapped, and they found themselves drifting down stream, in danger of a second wreck. Missionaries and boatmen rowed hard, and catching a backwater brought up at the very spot where they had spent Christmas drying their goods. The boat was abandoned as useless, and sending on a servant to Ch'ung-k'ing for chairs, they prepared to finish the journey overland.

In view of this *finale* two hearts at least must have been filled with apprehension. How should they—foreign women—ever enter the great city unobserved? What if their presence were discovered, or sounded abroad by their chair bearers? What if riotous crowds should gather to impede their progress? What if they were unable to settle, and their long journey should prove in vain? But committing themselves to the LORD they went forward.

The city they were now nearing has well been called the Liverpool of China. It is a great commercial centre, situated at the junction of the Kia-ling river with the mighty Yang-tsi; a city set on hills, surrounded by battlemented walls, and containing a population of three or four hundred thousand. Crowded shipping lines the river, extending far on either side. The streets are irregular, steep, and picturesque, though dirty in the extreme. Here, in 1877, Mr. McCarthy had obtained a house, and opened the first Protestant mission-station in SI-CH'UEN; and

here Mr. Nicoll had followed in charge of the work, until, for his marriage, he had gone to the coast. Just a year had elapsed since he had left the city, and glad indeed he was to see again its distant gates and towers.

Closely covered in sedan chairs, without luggage or anything that might betray their presence, the ladies were borne swiftly and silently through the crowded streets to one of the busiest parts of the town. Up a little by-lane, a large door gave immediate access to a narrow entry and the "Jesus-hall," through which they found their way to the inner court-yard, surrounded by the dwelling rooms and the handsome apartment for receiving guests. Warm was the greeting given to the travellers by Messrs. Riley and Samuel Clarke, who had held the fort alone so long, and now had the joy of welcoming the first lady workers to SI-CH'UEN; and keen was the interest with which Mrs. Nicoll, especially, surveyed her new home.

Nothing escaped that quick, close scrutiny, from the handsome carved furniture of the guest hall, and the narcissus smiling its cheery welcome, to the pitiful little traces of bachelor ways and doings—the ragged table-cloth, the forlorn arrangement of the rooms, and the dust of a week swept up and left behind the door according to Chinese custom.

It did not take long to settle in; and soon a woman's touch did wonders in brightening the missionary home, although keeping it strictly in harmony

with its Chinese surroundings. But greater than any other change was the magic attraction that, from the very hour of their arrival, drew the women in crowds to the no longer quiet mission-house. As soon as it was known that ladies had come, the women flocked in; first from the town and neighbourhood, and then from greater distances. It was nearing the time of the Chinese New Year, when in every household the women are very busy. New garments have to be made for the great festivals—New Year's time being the principal holiday in the Chinese calendar—and for several weeks beforehand the women hardly go out at all, so occupied are they indoors. In spite of this, however, one or two hundred came daily to see Mrs. Nicoll. And after the New Year, often as many as five hundred a day!

"For nearly two months past," she wrote, "I have daily seen some hundreds of women. Our house has been like a fair. Men also have come in large numbers to hear the Gospel. They are spoken to in the front part of the house; the women I see in the guest-hall at the back, and in the court-yard before it, for the room is very soon filled. As soon as one crowd goes out another is waiting to come in. Often indeed while seeing out one company at the front door, another has found its way in at the back."

Women of all classes alike gathered round her. On the second day after their arrival the ladies were invited out to dinner at the house of a military mandarin, the old gentleman coming himself to fetch them, and waiting to escort them through the

gathered throng. But it was on wet days, especially, that grand folk came to pay their visits, thinking that those that had to come on foot would be prevented by the rain. Then the little lane and entry would be crowded with chair-bearers waiting for their aristocratic mistresses, and Mrs. Nicoll, amid clouds of smoke from the long pipes in the guest-hall, would be surrounded by her gaily-dressed, small-footed friends, delighted to have her all to themselves.

Month after month the rush of visitors kept up, until the warmer weather came again, and the missionary lady—single-handed among the ten million women of SI-CH'UEN—was well-nigh exhausted. Sometimes the strain was so great that she used to faint away in the midst of her guests, and find herself brought to by the women fanning her, full of commiseration. They were very happy, but trying times. Often she had to get up at three o'clock in the morning to attend to her letters, or, if left till later in the day, had to write with the rooms full of women—watching with the keenest interest, talking loudly, and asking questions all the while. At first she could speak but little of the language, having only been out about a year. But she was learning quickly, and had the help of an elderly native evangelist, who used to talk to the visitors when she was tired.

For two years after her arrival in Ch'ung-k'ing Mrs. Nicoll never saw a foreign sister, and then only had a passing visit from one on a journey. In her loneliness, she thankfully welcomed the kindness of many of her

Chinese friends who showed real sympathy for her in her busy, solitary life. One elderly lady, knowing how weary she must be, used sometimes to send round her chair early in the morning, insisting upon her coming away at once from the mission-house. When she had got Mrs. Nicoll safely in her own home, she would send out all the young women and children, put her into a clean bed, and sit down quietly to fan her, until the tired missionary was fast asleep. Then she would prepare an inviting meal, watching all the while that her guest might not be disturbed, and when the latter awoke would persuade her to eat a good dinner. Often the same kind friend would send round some nice hot dish for breakfast, thinking that Mrs. Nicoll's cook might not have prepared just that delicacy for the foreigners.

In many of the mandarin's families Mrs. Nicoll had the freest access, and found the ladies full of sisterly feeling.

Hers was indeed a busy life! Managing for a considerable household, helping in her husband's large work, visiting continually, holding "at homes" for the women of the town, constantly called out to cases of opium suicide—of which there were sometimes two and three in a night—no wonder she found more work than she could compass. The only woman missionary in all that vast province of twenty million people—the first to live and labour for the women of SI-CH'UEN—what an honour for her! what a shame to the Church of CHRIST!

But the daily work was little, compared to the heart-burden caused by the sin and suffering all around. Infanticide was dreadful, and the opium curse everywhere doing its deadly work.

"Even infants," she wrote, "have to have the poison breathed into them at certain hours, when their mothers have been in the habit of taking it before their birth."

To women such as these, the message she had come to bring was wonderful and welcome. Could they know their sins forgiven? Could they be set free from the prison-house of vicious habit? Was there really a GOD who could and would deliver "His people from their sins"? By degrees many of them received the Gospel gladly, and were baptised and added to the growing church. Later on other workers came to reinforce the station, and Mrs. Nicoll was relieved; but we must not trespass upon that after-story.

* * * * * *

For one short week after their arrival at Ch'ung-k'ing Mrs. Nicoll had the companionship of her friend Mrs. George Clarke. For nearly three months they had travelled together, all the way from Shanghai to SI-CH'UEN. Together they had entered that great province. And gladly would they have remained together in the work. But Mrs. Clarke's long journey was not yet done. Another month of overland travel lay before her. Still another unentered province had to be penetrated, and a work commenced among its

women. Greater loneliness and hardships yet must be encountered if the women of KWEI-CHAU were to hear the Gospel.

Quiet, brave, patient—that little Swiss woman was just the one to go forward to such a charge. Full of missionary spirit, courage, and devotion, she did not count life itself dear to her in the service of the LORD she loved. And to her was given the privilege of being the first Christian woman to enter not KWEI-CHAU only, but also distant YUN-NAN; and finally, at the most westerly point yet reached by China Missions, to lay down her life for CHRIST'S sake.

Hard was the parting to those two tenderly attached friends. Mutual joys, sorrows, difficulties, dangers, and blessing had knit their hearts in one. Married together, that autumn day five months before; alone together, now, hundreds of miles from any Christian sister, and with such a work before them, little wonder that it was difficult to say farewell.

The last day came, and side by side they knelt that New Year's morning, committing one another to their GOD. As Mrs. Clarke poured out her soul in longing for the women of western China, her companion, with overflowing love for the devoted worker she might never see again, clasped her hand in sympathy too deep for words. Both felt a strange presentiment that their next meeting would be in the presence of the King.

An hour later, and they were parted, Mrs. Nicoll

left alone in the midst of the great city, Mrs. Clarke out on her journey southward, toward three vast provinces whose women had never heard the Name of CHRIST.

Alone in the distant Kwei-yang capital, Mr. Broumton was eagerly expecting the travellers' arrival. Mr. Clarke had been there before, but now a lady was coming, to make the lonely home more bright, and to reach the women for whom nothing had yet been attempted. Four weeks later the Clarkes arrived, after a difficult but remarkably quiet journey, and very soon the women began to gather round them.

Toward the end of the same month, February 1880 two other ladies started from Wu-ch'ang to join Mrs. Clarke in her distant sphere. Their journey—the third accomplished by European women in the far Interior—was remarkable, as proving that even HUNAN, the most strongly anti-foreign of all the provinces in China, was open to the itineration of women as well as of men. Travellers experienced in dealing with the Chinese—English consular officials, merchants, and missionaries—had met with serious difficulty within its borders. For *women* to attempt to cross it might well have seemed impossible. But when, for the sake of their sisters in western China, this formidable journey was undertaken by a newly made widow and one young companion, the hand of a protecting GOD was over them for good. Miss Kidd had been twelve months in China, Mrs. W. McCarthy ten. Landing with her husband in the spring of

1879,* they had been designated for KWEI-CHAU and KWANG-SI, but a two days' fever in the midsummer heat at Wu-ch'ang, had laid him in an early grave.

"We were going west together, and, GOD willing, I still will go," was her quiet resolve. And when reinforcements were needed for KWEI-CHAU she volunteered.

Mr. Baller, who had accompanied Mrs. Taylor to SHAN-SI, was at liberty to escort this party also, and thus was the first to cross HU-NAN with foreign ladies. Beautiful, populous, healthy, rich in produce and exports, and inhabited by people of a fine, determined character, and great ability, this province has always offered a noble sphere for missionary enterprise, but never yet granted permanent entrance to the Gospel. Proud, exclusive, and bitterly opposed to Christianity, its ruling classes utterly refuse access to their cities, or any prolonged residence within their borders; and many a time has their opposition resulted in turbulent uprising and riotous ejectment of European travellers. Yet here, amid perils seen and unseen, our friends courageously and safely journeyed, meet-

* June 1879 was unusually hot. Mr. William McCarthy, brother to Mr. John McCarthy of our Mission, was superintending the removal of some furniture one Saturday, and was exposed to the sun. A restless night followed; on Sunday he was in high fever; and on Monday morning died of heat apoplexy. His bright spirituality and earnestness were full of promise. "His brief career has been a blessing to us all," wrote one; "I am a better man for having known him, though but for so short a time"

ing a kindly reception from the women, to whom they found free access, and amongst whom, all along their route, they published the story of the love of JESUS.

The following letter from Miss Kidd contains the first record of evangelistic work amongst the women of HU-NAN, *still without any missionary to-day.*

"We left Wu-ch'ang on the 19th of February, 1880, these words ringing in our ears, 'You have only the great GOD to take care of you.' Truly our trust in Him has not been in vain.

"We soon set to work and made our boat comfortable. It had five little rooms, and really they were very nice. The head boatman was a Christian, and always ready with a word for JESUS. His wife was on board, and became much attached to us. . . .

"All the way along, except at large cities, Mrs. McCarthy and I have been able to go ashore, or invite the women to come on board to see us.

"I like these HU-NAN women so much! They have been very kind, most willing to receive us and listen to our message. Amongst them our fair hair and unbound feet seem to pass almost unnoticed. The whiteness of our complexion strikes them most, and when they put their hands beside ours they laugh very heartily at the difference.

"Our native Christian woman was the greatest help. Never having seen foreigners before, the women along our route were naturally a little afraid of us at first. But she explained so nicely all about us and our presence in their midst, and soon they would draw near, take us by the hand, and invite us to their houses. Once indoors, we were often surrounded by quite a crowd.

"One incident amused me much. We had anchored at a village for the night, and some women asked us to go ashore. Mrs. McCarthy had face-ache, so I went alone. A woman about half my size, with a baby in her arms, took hold of one of my hands, and a young girl of fifteen took the other, and thus they led me along the village street, telling me not to be afraid of the crowds, for *they* would take care of me! At our destination a large number of women came to see me, some of whom seemed to grasp the facts of the Gospel very clearly. The same little woman with the baby led me back to the boat. The LORD bless her, dear, kind soul!

"Sundays we thoroughly enjoyed. For then we never travelled, and invariably found opportunities for work. After morning worship with our own people, Mr. Baller and Mr. Trench would go ashore to preach on the streets, and we to visit the women in their homes.

"'Why do you not stay to teach us?' they would ask, at some places. 'Why do you go on to KWEI-CHAU? We, too, are longing to hear!'

"We were much struck all along our journey through HU-NAN by the well-to-do appearance of the people, and the remarkable beauty of the scenery. . . . We had to pass a great many dangerous rapids, and nearly every day our boat sprung a fresh leak. Notwithstanding our perils, however, GOD brought us through in safety, and here we are to praise Him.

"In April, nearly two months after we left Wu-ch'ang, we reached the end of the water journey, and chairs and coolies were engaged for the road. We had rather dreaded this overland travelling, but found our fears groundless. It was most enjoyable. Our resting-places were not at all uncomfortable, and we had everything we could wish.

"In crossing the high mountains the air was delightfully bracing, and the views lovely. At night in the inns the

landlady always came in to see us, and we would invite her to bring her friends to hear the Gospel. Sometimes the room was filled several times over with attentive listeners. . . .

"After nine days on the road we reached our destination, and were heartily welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. George Clarke. . . . Every day since our arrival we have had visitors. I like what I have seen of the KWEI-CHAU women, and am very glad to find that they can understand my Chinese."

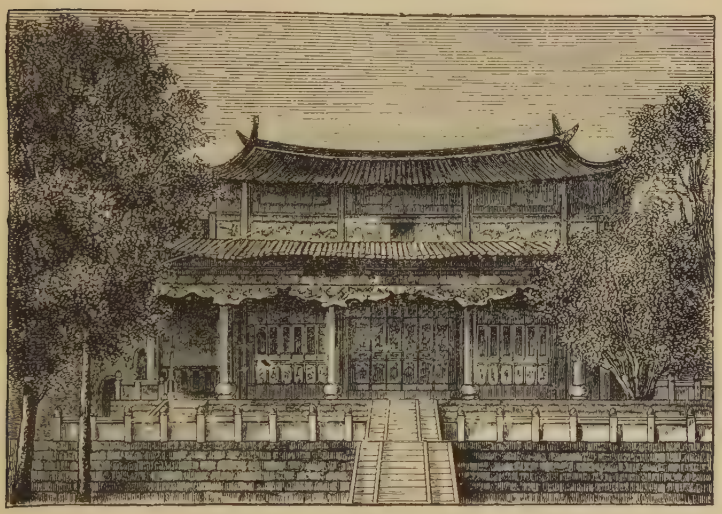
A few months after the arrival of Mrs. W. McCarthy and Miss Kidd, a little son given to the Clarkes brought sunshine into that distant missionary home. But before the end of the year the child-life was recalled by Him who gave it, and the parents' hearts left desolate and empty, with more room for love, but the little loved one gone. In their sorrow and bereavement they heard the voice of GOD. The needs of the Christless, heathen lives around them stood out more clearly than ever before, and their very freedom from the home-ties that had been so dear, seemed to summon them to go farther into the darkness and seek to pioneer the way for the Gospel in the neighbouring province of YUN-NAN. Just beyond them it lay, a vast region, more than twice as large as England, and with a population of at least five millions, among whom no Protestant missionaries had ever laboured. Others had come to KWEI-CHAU, and the Clarkes felt that they could now be spared. No one was ready for YUN-NAN. Had not GOD set them free that they might go? And so the close of

the year, darkened for them by the loss of their little son, carried their letter volunteering for YUN-NAN to the Director of the Mission, and at the same time, far away, GOD was preparing a place for them in that as yet unentered sphere.

Four years earlier, Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau had been thwarted in their purpose to enter YUN-NAN and Western China *viâ* Burmah.* Hindered by the Indian Government, they had settled down at Bhamô, close to the Burmo-Chinese frontier, to work and wait, and pray for the opening of the gates of the West. After long patience their hopes were at last realised, when, an old trade-road having been re-opened across friendly territory, they were able to secure places in the second caravan from Bhamô, and found themselves on New Year's Eve 1880–81, surrounded by the busy, crowded streets of Ta-li Fu, with the blue waters of a Chinese lake below, reflecting the snow-capped mountains of YUN-NAN. The fame of their frontier Medical Mission secured for them a warm welcome even in official circles in this important city; and impressed by the healthy climate, large population, and abundant opportunities for evangelistic work, they felt not a little inclined to accept the pressing invitations given them to stay in Ta-li and commence similar efforts. But, for them, it was impossible. Their destination was Shanghai, and after a brief stay they travelled on, completing

* See Chapter XI.

that remarkable journey in which China was crossed for the first time from west to east. On the last day of the old year, before leaving Ta-li, they held a Watch-Night service in that distant Chinese city, praying especially for some one to come and commence missionary efforts there for the women as well



TEMPLE AT TA-LI FU.

as the men. Little did they think that through sorrow and bereavement the Unseen Hand was even then preparing an answer to their prayers; little guess that forty days' journey away to the east, in the nearest mission-station, two hearts beside a little grave, watered by tears, in the closing days

that same year had consecrated themselves to GOD for the men and women of YUN-NAN.

Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau did not go to Kwei-yang, nor meet with Mr. and Mrs. Clarke. Passing through Ch'ung-k'ing, however, they found at Mr. Nicoll's station a Chinaman who owned a house in Ta-li Fu, and was willing to rent to foreigners. Mr. Hudson Taylor, on hearing the circumstances, sent word to take the house, and shortly afterwards the deeds were forwarded to Mr. Clarke at Kwei-yang by the hand of a brother who was to set him free for the journey. Thus, in the lovely month of May 1881, Mr. and Mrs. Clarke went forward to their new work. None but a mother can know what it cost that mother's heart to leave the home brightened for a few short weeks by the presence of the treasure GOD had taken, nor how hard it was to part from that little lonely grave outside the walls of the city. But there were other mothers' hearts aching and burdened among the millions of YUN-NAN—other women with greater sorrows, and none of the faith that cheered and strengthened her. To these she went, longing to help them with the comfort wherewith she had been comforted of GOD.

The difficult journey was accomplished in safety. On May 30th the boundary was crossed, and YUN-NAN entered for the first time by a woman missionary, and on June 24th the travellers reached Ta-li Fu.

The house rented for them stood pleasantly near the city wall, which commanded fine views of the

mountains and lake. But unfortunately it was still occupied by two Chinese families, who would not turn out to make room for the strangers, although the latter had legal possession for a term of six months, The one little yard was given up to the pigs and fowls and children, and the Clarkes were sadly cramped for room, and deprived of any possibility of quiet. Visitors crowded to see them in large numbers, coming early in the morning, and staying till late at night. So great was the curiosity of the people, that Mrs. Clarke was unable for a long time to go out freely, and could only receive the women in the house. From the very first they had to face trouble and opposition, largely due to the Roman Catholics, who seemed to do everything in their power to prevent Mr. Clarke getting quarters, spreading rumours that frightened the people and kept up suspicion and mistrust. For two months Mr. Clarke could get no teacher, and for five months his wife was unable to engage a woman-servant to help her in the house.

Letters but rarely reached them, communication with other stations being difficult. Their correspondence was sometimes seven or more months after date and their position was extremely lonely. Yet they felt sure of the call of GOD; that they were in the right place, and at His bidding. The needs around them were unutterably great. Sometimes at night in that first trying summer, after the long, busy day, they would go up alone together to the city wall, and look out over the lake bordered with hundreds of populous

villages, intensely realising the condition of the vast province in which they were the only Protestant missionaries.

But it was trying work, for Mrs. Clarke especially. It seemed as if the hearts of the people would not open to her, much as she longed to reach them. And sometimes the home left behind in Kwei-yang, with all its cherished memories, seemed very dear and very far away.

"It is just a year this August," she wrote to Miss Kidd, "since we rejoiced over the birth of our darling boy. How soon it passed away! So often I think of that little child, in the Glory. What a change the year has brought! It is better for us not to know the future. Have you been again to see his little grave?"

After telling of some of the difficulties and trials she adds—

"We have not yet got a house, and the people will not let us remain in this. But we both feel assured that we have obeyed the call of GOD in coming here. Others will follow us some day. . . . Notwithstanding all, we are very happy in Ta-li Fu; we are in good health, and realise the presence of the LORD."

By degrees the long, hot summer wore away. More snow began to fall on the mountains, and the six months were nearly ended for which the house was taken. But still the Clarkes had no home. Just as matters were really getting serious, a scholar of the town consented to rent them a house, and they were able to get settled by Christmas after all. This new

abode was a great improvement. "Mud floors are not very warm in winter," wrote Mrs. Clarke, "and it will be nice to have a real bedroom again."

Far greater than any personal discomfort, however, was the trial that came from contact with the sin and suffering around them every day.

"This is a terrible place," she adds. "Sodom and Gomorrah could not have been more wicked. Just as I write the husband of my woman has come—a wretched opium smoker—and taken her little girl away. Last year he sold her two other children; this one is only three years old. We can do nothing to prevent it. GOD help them! He wishes to sell his wife as well.

"One of our neighbours went further, and was going to kill his wife and child. My husband and three women held him. I never before witnessed such terrible scenes. Oh, what a land! Nothing but sorrow and sin."

Difficulties of communication being so great, it had, from the first, been decided to open an intermediate station at the capital of the province, Yun-nan Fu. This Messrs. Eason and Andrew accomplished in January 1882. And in July, more than a year after they had left Kwei-yang, Mr. and Mrs. Clarke had the joy of welcoming these brethren at Ta-li, and uniting again in prayer and fellowship with others of the LORD'S people.

It was decided that, for a time, Mr. and Mrs. Clarke should occupy the new station at the capital, leaving the young men for quiet study at Ta-li. Thus in the autumn these brave pioneers were again homeless in

an unfriendly heathen city. The opposition here was even greater than at Ta-li. The landlord would not let them remain, and was continually urging their departure, and no one else was willing to rent to the foreigners. The people would not believe that Mr. and Mrs. Clarke were different from the Romanists, whom they cordially hated. Many false reports were spread about them, and no one would come near their house.

Week after week went on, and not a single woman came to see Mrs. Clarke, or invited her into their homes. She could not get a servant, and had to do all her own washing and housework, and to make her own shoes. Sometimes she would go and stand on the door of the street, and call or beckon the neighbouring women to come over and talk. Some might venture, timidly, but none would come inside.

"Nobody but GOD," she wrote, "can tell what patience we need. He knows I am longing to work for Him. If I cannot reach the women at present I can pray to be ready in His good time."

The only way seemed to be to make friends with the children in the streets. Mrs. Clarke had some of Mrs. Grimke's text cards in Chinese, and these she gave to the little ones, who by degrees came again for more, bringing their mothers with them. Some of these women asked Mrs. Clarke to their houses, and so the tiny coloured cards opened the door. Amongst the men Mr. Clarke had more oppor-

tunities, and was very busy preaching every day on the streets and printing off tracts from wooden blocks that he had brought with him. Many thousands of these he sold and distributed both in Ta-li and Yun-nan Fu.

After nearly a year at the capital they returned

THE MISSION-HOUSE AT TA-LI FU.

again to Ta-li, glad to be back in their old home by the lake and near the glorious mountains. To Mrs. Clarke the beautiful sunsets upon the snow peaks and blue expanse of water, recalled happy home-days of long ago, in her own loved Switzerland. Often would she steal out when a quiet evening came, to forget the present scenes, and think once more of the

exquisite mountains and villages of her far-off Fatherland.

To their distress, the missionaries found the Ta-li people less friendly than they had been at first. Already the French troubles in Tong-king were beginning, just over the border, and the natives naturally connected all foreigners with their hated enemies.

On August 20th, 1883, not long after their return, a little son was born to them in their loneliness. They called him "Ta-li," with many hopes and prayers.

The heat was very great, but in spite of this, and all the inconveniences of their situation, Mrs. Clarke seemed to be making progress towards recovery. She had by this time the help of two women-servants, and much kindness was shown by some Roman Catholic neighbours. Her husband rejoiced to hope all would be well, for he had been not a little troubled by a vivid dream, twice repeated, that he was to be parted from her at this time. Far, far away from friends and help, how anxiously he watched day by day for the returning strength that seemed slow in coming. There was no European doctor within more than six weeks' journey. There was no lady to share the nursing, or cheer her in moments of weakness. For more than two years she had not seen a sister in the LORD, nor had the companionship of any but Chinese women. Days passed slowly by, and still she seemed no stronger. At last she became decidedly worse; complications came on, she could take no

food, and suffered exceedingly from sickness, pain, and terrible thirst. Always gentle and patient, she tried every means her husband could think of to obtain relief, but in vain. The LORD had need of her. The home summons had come, and she knew it.

On Friday, October 5th, thinking that she should never see another sunrise, she wished to take the Lord's Supper for the last time with her husband. The little baby, six weeks old, was by her side, its innocent eyes, warm breath, and tiny, clinging fingers sending a thrill of yearning through and through the mother's heart. On the eve of that last, long parting, and yet in perfect peace, those two together broke bread in their grief and isolation, remembering the Man of Sorrows. They reconsecrated their little son to GOD, christened with his father's tears, and committed themselves entirely to His hands, for life or death. Both were wonderfully at rest, and even joyful.

"Oh, read to me about the New Jerusalem! . . . I shall soon be by the river of the water of life and thirst no more," she said.

Tenderly her husband told her something of what she had been to him through all those years of loneliness; how he had always admired her devotion, and been uplifted by her Christlike spirit, in the midst of hardships and trials. "No, do not flatter me," she whispered. "I am the least of all Christians. I feel I have done less than any woman in the Mission."

A group of China women stole in to her bedside next day, and in the solemn hush of that chamber of death, she told them with joy and triumph of her perfect rest in CHRIST, and begged them, too, to put their trust in the Saviour. Others gathered round, some Roman Catholics amongst them, moved by the earnest testimony she bore as to her faith in the finished work of CHRIST.

Then came the last, long night. Her husband watched beside her, as he had done, alone, for forty-eight days past. The Lord's Day morning dawned, its shining radiance gilding the snow-peaks and lighting the blue lake-water—a silent prophecy and symbol of the uncreated light of the city that hath "no need of the sun." She lay in great pain, longing to go home.

"Take care of my little son," she charged the Chinese nurse.

Thoughts of the dear child gone before seemed to be much with her.

"I shall have one little boy in heaven," she said to her husband, "and you one on earth."

Twilight fell, and deepened into a perfect autumn evening, as the Lord's Day closed. Slowly the sun went down behind the mountains, flooding all the lovely scene with light. And in the gloaming, peacefully, she passed away to GOD.

"The LORD gave her to me," wrote the heart-broken husband, "and the LORD has taken His own. . . . This is the deepest water He has ever

caused me to cross. Blessed be His Name for the joy of knowing JESUS in every circumstance of life. . . .

"Now I am alone. An empty chair stands beside me at my solitary meals. There is no dear face or voice to cheer me, save that of my motherless boy. Thank GOD for this solace! 'The LORD is good—and doeth good.'"

On Monday, scores of women from the city came to look their last on the quiet face that they should see no more. Great was their surprise at its calmness, as of a sleeper in perfect rest. Amid heathendom's darkness, cruelty, and terror of the unseen, a peaceful death-bed is almost inconceivable. Silently the women stood, wondering much at that still presence, and at the story of those who had heard her dying words of joy and triumph. Never could they forget it, never lose the memory of that hour that brought them face to face with death robbed of victory, and the grave of its sting.

Far from the home-land a letter had been travelling for months to reach the hands and heart that now were still. It brought some little Swiss flowers from her loved mountains, and the day they came her husband with his own hands laid her to rest. Outside the south gate of the city she sleeps in her lonely grave, with China all around her and the flowers on her breast.

* * * * * *

So closed the year 1883 upon woman's work in inland China—from its most distant outpost, one of

the bravest of its pioneers gone to her last long home.

Five years before all the vast Interior had been without a single woman-worker; but when Mrs. Clarke died at Ta-li Fu ladies were settled in six of the nine inland provinces, and two more, HU-NAN and HO-NAN, had been traversed and resided in for shorter periods. One of the most noteworthy of these pioneering achievements was that of Miss Wilson of Kendal, who, not content with going with a native escort only, to SHEN-SI, had pressed on with Mr. and Mrs. George Parker to KAN-SUH, a province as large as Great Britain, and so far west as to belong to central Asia almost more than to China proper. With only one Protestant mission-station, this great region had no worker amongst its women until the courageous journey of this noble English lady, and her Chinese friend.*

A summary of the work done thus far, is worth recording:—

In October '78 Mrs. Hudson Taylor reached T'ai-yuen, capital of SHAN-SI.

In November '79 Mrs. King arrived at Han-chung, in SHEN-SI.

In January '80 Mrs. Nicoll settled at Ch'ung-k'ing, in SI-CH'UEN.

In February '80 Mrs. George Clarke reached Kwei-yang, the capital of KWEI-CHAU; and Mrs. W. McCarthy and Miss Kidd started to cross HU-NAN, on their way to join her.

* Mrs. George Parker is Chinese by birth, and was trained in the Yang-chau mission-school.

In January '81 Mrs. George Parker and Miss Wilson found a home at Ts'in-chau, in KAN-SUH.

In June '81 Mrs. G. Clarke went on from Kwei-yang to Ta-li Fu, in YUN-NAN.

In March to June of the same year, '81, a second memorable journey was made by ladies across HU-NAN, when Mrs. McCarthy returned, as Mrs. Broumton, to Kwei-yang, taking Miss Kerr with her. They were wrecked on the way, and had to stay a fortnight in one place far in the heart of the province—Lo-si-p'ing, near Kien-yang Hien—where they had great encouragement in their work amongst the women, and perfect freedom of access to them.

And in December '81 Mrs. Henry Hunt, a young bride, went up to Ru-ning Fu, her husband's station in HO-NAN, and was able to reside there for more than two months, having access to women of all classes. Disturbances occurred which necessitated her leaving, and it was some years ere woman's work was again recommenced in that province. But a beginning was thus made, and Mrs. Hunt was the first to preach the Gospel to the women of HO-NAN.

Thus within three brief years, October '78 to December '81, C. I. M. women-workers had been enabled to enter and settle in six of the inland provinces, beside bringing the Gospel to hundreds of women in HO-NAN and HU-NAN, where they could not long remain.

Only those who know the difficulties and trials of life far in the heart of China, and the dangers and hardships of long journeys in such a land, can fully appreciate all that these facts mean. Only those who have experienced continued loneliness, isolation, and peril among the heathen, can know what those

pioneer women endured. Only those who, under such circumstances, have faced sickness, far from any medical aid, acute suffering, and even death itself, can understand what the sacrifice involved that was sealed by those first missionary-graves in far-off SHEN-SI and YUN-NAN.

GOD gave those early workers faith and courage, and the burning love to CHRIST and China's women, that led them to count all things but loss that they might by any means save some. GOD opened the way before them, and carried them through all difficulties, opposition, and danger. GOD sustained their hearts in hours of suffering and loneliness, and made true in their experience the words spoken by Mr. Taylor to one of their number, on the eve of parting :—

"You go forth in a new pathway. Much of solitude and heart-loneliness must certainly be yours. But the harder the way, the more complete the loneliness, the sweeter and closer will be your fellowship with CHRIST, who has trodden the same path before you. And in His work and will you will find peace and blessing."

Think of that little pioneer band in those first years -- eight or a dozen helpless women, scattered at their distant posts, one station to each of those vast inland provinces, most of them 1,500 miles or more from the coast ; picture their daily lives, surrounded on all hands by that boundless sea of heathenism, millions of suffering, degraded, dark-hearted women, and they

so unable to do what they *would* to reach them; think of them in their hours of heart-hunger, discouragement, pain, and feel the wonderful power of the Unseen and Eternal that so sustained, comforted, and strengthened them. Scene after scene rises unbidden as we recall their faithful service; but one —the last—perhaps more than any other, sums up and expresses the supreme soul-secret that lies behind them all.

Far off in loneliness and pain George Clarke's young wife lies dying in distant YUN-NAN. For more than two years she has seen no Christian sister, and now at the close only Chinese heathen women gather around her bed. Above all the suffering, above all the anguish of parting from husband and child, her spirit rises on wings of faith to GOD, and, filled with joy and triumph, she is striving, even in death, to win those heathen women to the Saviour of the world. This has been her life-work and supreme longing; it shall also be her last endeavour.

She has seemed to accomplish little, but her heart is stayed on GOD. She has done what she could. It was in His will that she should toil and suffer among the pioneers, apparently unrewarded. Results will come in His "due season"; blessing that she will have helped to bring, souls that she will have won in part. "*Others will come after us*," she has written; and often in her sorest trials that conviction has been her stay. Her life has been willingly spent in laying the foundations. And it is finished now.

She cannot see the fruitful work, the wide and noble labours yet to follow. She cannot realise the future women's stations, or the scores of loving young evangelists who, successful and blessed beyond her highest dreams, are to succeed her in the way her pilgrim feet have trodden. She only knows that for her the pilgrimage is ended, and that before her flows among the shadows the river she must cross alone.

All is over now—the long patience, the isolation, the soul-burden in the midst of heathendom, all the hours of heart-ache and longing for the far home-land and loved ones, all the burning tears shed on her baby's grave, and over China's awful sin and sorrow, all the sweet brightness shown for her husband's sake in trial, and amid irksome inconvenience, all the loving influence on cold, heathen hearts around her, the selflessness that had put her in touch with their smallest need, the tireless efforts for their salvation, the studies, household labours, service, prayers—all are ended now, and through her uplifted eyes the strong spirit almost seems to see the city beyond the river.

Her husband repeats to her the well-loved hymn, "*Leaning on Thee.*" How true she has found it, how comforting through all those years. It is fit that what has been so long her confidence should be her final message. One worn hand lies in his, the other tenderly clasps their little child, but the pilgrimage is ended, and she must cross alone.

Alone? Did they think so who watched that pale transfigured face? Could they think so who looked into those clear eyes that saw so far beyond the poor Chinese city, beyond the dark-eyed faces that bent over her? The very heathen women at her side could see she was not unattended, could catch the meaning though they knew not the language of her faint dying song—

> "Leaning on Thee no fear alarms,
> Although I stand on death's dark brink;
> I feel the Everlasting Arms,
> I shall not sink."

For in this faith she went down to the shadowy river; in this faith she passed over to the other side.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PRESENT-DAY PICTURES.
AND FACTS FOR THE THOUGHTFUL.

FIVE years have passed away, and twilight is again falling on the Empire of the East, veiling its vast expanses, river, mountain, desert, plain, and populous cities. It is a cold March evening, the busy working-day is over, as the great city of Yang-chau, with its three hundred thousand men and women, fully understands. The sun has set, and all the shops are closing. Even in China rest must sometimes come.

Dimly the waning light slants through the windows of a large house on the P'i-shï Kiai. The evening meal is ended, but gathered round the tables the friends still linger who are so soon to part. Chinese in dress and surroundings, they are still foreigners in face and language—a goodly company of thirty-five young missionary sisters, recently come to this strange land. The calm, steadfast look in those earnest faces is certainly not the outcome of Chinese ethics, faiths, or philosophies. They are singing in the twilight, hymns of the homeland, and thinking

of the parting on the morrow, when half their little band will be dispersed and scattered, like lights into the darkness, far to north, south, and west over the vast Empire. Happy and helpful have been their first student-days here in the Training Home at Yang-chau, and very solemn and sacred are the last hours passing so quickly away! Twilight deepens, the lamps are lighted, and in a few minutes before evening worship, several gather round a large map of China to trace out the long journeys that each must take.

What a land, this to which their lives are given! How vast! How inconceivable its needs! No wonder that the last hour of their sojourn here together should be spent in heart-communion with the Unseen Guide, Sustainer, Friend of all. Going forth from this quiet upper room into the furthest depths of heathen China, these young, helpless women, inexperienced in the ways of the great nation that surrounds them, without wealth, wisdom, power, or protection, have no refuge, and no strength, but GOD.

Strange experiences lie before them.

These, recently from London, will be two months travelling steadily up the great Yang-tsi before they reach SI-CH'UEN, the scene of their future labours. The three next go with them to their destination, and then on beyond to Pao-ning, two and a half months' pilgrimage. Three are bound for the capital of YUN-NAN, that great southern province where, five

years before, a precious life had been laid down that the women might have the Gospel. They will be four months travelling, three by boat and one by overland. Some are *en route* for SHEN-SI, and must make their way for three months up the Han; while the last group, going on beyond them to distant KAN-SUH, have still a month's overland journey to Lan-chau, and thence a further stage to Liang-chau, which they may hope to reach in five or six months from the time of their departure to-morrow.

Well may they commend one another to GOD in prayer.

From the narrow street without, the sound of passing bells and feet on the uneven way comes up to the quiet room, where all are gathered for the last time, and the great temple-gong peals forth from the Buddhist shrine with its ten thousand idols, close at hand.

Within, the Holy Supper is spread by gentle hands, a simple table in the midst, bearing bread and wine, and over all a pure white cloth, on which the mellow lamplight falls. Peaceful and radiant are the faces gathered here, and sacred the benediction that closes this hallowed hour:—

The LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself says—the LORD says especially to those who are leaving us—"All power is given unto Me, go ye therefore, and lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end."

* * * * * *

Again five years have passed away, and now we

stand at the distance of a decade from 1883, and the close of the last chapter.

Can it be ten years only since George Clarke's young wife lay dying in far-off Ta-li Fu?

"Others will come after us," she had written. She was right. Many have come.

* * * * * * *

Only knowing China as it is to-day, one finds it almost impossible to realise that so short a time ago Woman's Work in the Interior was in its earliest initial stages.

Two stations in SHAN-SI where women were labouring; one in SHEN-SI, with two lady missionaries; another in KAN-SUH, also having two workers; in SI-CH'UEN two stations and three ladies only; in KWEI-CHAU one station, and one solitary sister; in YUN-NAN the only woman worker laid in her quiet grave; and in HO-NAN, HU-NAN, and KWANG-SI no one at all to tell the women of JESUS—*this* only ten years ago!

Yet, even so, it was a great advance upon previous conditions. A little while before, there had been no lady missionaries in any of these nine inland provinces. Imagine a population larger than the entire French and German nations, scattered over an area three times the size of France, wrapped in the densest, most self-sufficient heathenism the world has ever seen; and then picture, as a spiritual agency to reach this sphere, a few evangelists itinerating among the men, and no one at all for the women.

Such was the state of things in inland China as recently as 1878.

Ten years ago, in 1883, the experiment had been tried. It was a matter for great thankfulness not only to have proved that this vast territory was accessible to women, but to have obtained residence for them in as many as eight of its populous cities. There they were, living and working unhindered. But how small a step after all! Only the threshold of the Interior was crossed, only a tentative effort was begun.

As yet, even in the C. I. M., there was no systematic organisation for the work of women. Very few unmarried ladies had gone inland, and prejudice was still strongly opposed to their doing so. There were no stations anywhere in China worked by ladies only, and thus a great principle of development had not yet been adopted. There was no home set apart for receiving and training the young sisters as they landed. In fact, the great conception of women evangelists for inland China was but beginning to dawn. And there lay that vast Interior, waiting for the Gospel.

Only ten years ago!

And to-day, what has been the result of the early beginnings traced in our last chapter? How has the brave attempt of those pioneer women been justified? How has their faith been rewarded?

In January 1876, when Miss Wilson of Kendal sailed for China, there was only *one* unmarried

C. I. M. lady on the field.* Since that time more than three hundred and seventy have gone out, and the present staff includes two hundred and twenty single sisters.

Ten years ago, in October 1883, there were twenty-seven principal stations, at eighteen of which ladies were working in association with other missionaries, but no stations were being worked by women only. Now there are a hundred and six principal stations, in eighty of which ladies are working, and twenty of the latter, in six provinces, are superintended by them alone.

Advance, in the interior, only entered as described in the last chapter, has been equally remarkable :—

	In 1883				In 1893
SHAN-SI	had 2	stations	with lady	workers	has 11
SHEN-SI	,, 1	,,	,,	,,	,, 3
KAN-SUH	,, 1	,,	,,	,,	,, 4
SI-CH'UEN	,, 2	,,	,,	,,	,, 9
KWEI-CHAU	,, 1	,,	,,	,,	,, 1
YUN-NAN	,, 1	,,	,,	,,	,, 6
HO-NAN	,, 0	,,	,,	,,	,, 3
HU-NAN	,, 0	,,	,,	,,	,, 0
KWANG-SI	,, 0	,,	,,	,,	,, 0
Total	8				Total 37

And the women workers in those provinces, then only eight in number, are now more than seventy-five—a growth of between seven and eight hundred per cent. in a single decade. Well may we exclaim, "What hath GOD wrought?"

* Miss Emmeline Turner, now in HO-NAN.

But fully as important as this statistical increase has been the advance in more intangible ways—the development of the whole conception of woman's work for inland China. To-day it is no longer considered impossible or even difficult to send ladies to the remotest parts of the Empire. It is generally recognised that they can live and work as well among women fifteen hundred miles from the coast as among those at the open ports. No station is considered complete unless women are found on its staff. And a thorough organisation for facilitating the work of such is now an integral part of the Inland Mission.

How different the experience of the young worker going out at present in connection with the C. I. M. from what it was ten years ago! From the moment of landing in China she finds herself surrounded by those whose chief aim it is to help her to learn the language, get into touch with the people, understand and accommodate herself to her new surroundings, discover the sphere for which she is most suited, and safely accomplish the journey thither.

Ladies are ready to receive her in Shanghai, and arrange her Chinese outfit. A happy, quiet home awaits her at Yang-chau, two days' journey inland, where helpful missionary friends expect her coming, and a capital staff of teachers, both foreigners and Chinese, are ready to initiate her into the mysteries of the language. There are those at hand ready to give all information she may desire about the far-reaching operations of the Mission, and to make her

acquainted with its stations, workers, and various openings and needs. Comfort in hours of loneliness, spiritual help and strength, counsel in all matters of difficulty, and the noblest inspiration for future service, are all to be found in the loving sympathy and Christ-like lives of those who have specially devoted themselves to increasing the usefulness of her missionary career. Experienced escorts are ready, later on, to make the journey easy to some distant scene of labour, where in many cases she will be welcomed by other ladies who have gone before, made a home, and found a sphere, affording speedy openings for usefulness. And all this complete organisation is in the hands of missionary women like herself, whose deepest sympathy is with her, who have given up the direct personal service so dear to their hearts, that they may place their experience at her disposal, and forward the whole cause by strengthening and helping her.

Her work will not be all easy. Far from it. Real self-sacrifice and willingness to suffer loneliness and a measure of hardship are needed, if the women of inland China are to be reached. There is very little romance about the practical work of missions; less perhaps in China than elsewhere; and the women of the C.I.M. have to meet their full share of the difficulties and trials that fall to a missionary's lot. At the coast and in the open ports there are many comforts that cannot be carried inland. There is less loneliness, more Christian fellowship, and more

of the protection afforded by gun-boats and foreign consuls. All this must be left behind with the seaboard provinces, when one turns toward the great, unreached Beyond. So much is this the case that the strongest objections are raised to the principles and practice of the Mission in allowing ladies to be exposed to the hardships involved in such work. With a sympathy more kind than strengthening, many would counsel "pity thyself"; and urge us to draw the line short of really seeking to carry the Gospel "to every creature," including women in the remotest parts of inland China.

"What things were *gain* to me, those I counted loss for CHRIST" must be the missionary's spirit if ever this work is to be done. But that it *can* be done, and is attended with marked blessing, the experience of our Mission abundantly attests.

Successful experiment is the best demonstration. The following scene and story speak for themselves :—

WORK ON THE KWANG-SIN RIVER.*

We stand within the compound of a mission-dwelling. Around us an inland city, beautifully situated in the heart of a fine mountain region, the watershed of three provinces, CHEH-KIANG, FUH-KIEN, and KIANG-SI. Two hundred miles away lies the coast-line of the Empire, and the comparative civilisation of the open ports. A spacious but unpretending building is before us, pleasant and home-like in spite of its Chinese exterior.

Pass upstairs into the guest-hall through the open recep-

* Recollections of the first KIANG-SI Conference held at Yuh-shan, September 8th and 9th, 1890.

tion room below. Summer sunshine falls on the simple furniture arranged in regular semi-Chinese style—uncarpeted floor, heavy chairs and tea-tables placed alternately round the walls, bright scrolls with Chinese lettering, and a "baby organ" in one corner.

At the central table a group of ladies are intent on some important work; young most of them, none past thirty-five, and all in Chinese dress. There are English girls amongst them, only lately come to China. There are quiet, brave, Scotch lassies, who six years before left their northern home to give themselves to the women of this land; there are girls from Canada and the United States, first to join the Inland Mission from these countries of the west; there is one at any rate from the continent of Europe, whose home lies among Swiss mountains, far away. How sweet and bright the light upon those faces, how purposeful and strong the spirit that shines there! And how much, one feels, must lie behind the restful, earnest calm so clearly written upon many a brow! Gathered from distant lands; representing five nationalities, and as many different sections of the Church of CHRIST; each with a past so different, guided in her own way, but all with equal clearness to China's shores; some from the east, some from the west, united here as one large family—what is the meaning of this little group?

Upon the beautiful Kwang-sin river in north-eastern KIANG-SI, the China Inland Mission has a chain of eight important stations. Little churches are formed in all these places, and a devoted band of native helpers are spreading the Gospel in the districts around. No men missionaries are settled in this region. Ladies only are in charge of the rapidly growing work. And these sixteen, young, unmarried sisters, represent the band of twenty-one who are here holding the fort alone. In the whole of this vast province, almost as large as England and Scotland put together, and

with a population of fifteen millions, theirs is the only work for women—excepting some efforts on the Po-yang lake, and at Kiu-kiang on the Yang-tsi. At a considerable distance from any other foreigners, they live together in native houses in these Chinese cities, wearing the native dress, and going in and out among the people, unprotected, and without fear. At intervals their Superintendent, Mr. McCarthy, comes over from Yang-chau to visit the stations, and give what help he can. At this little Conference he has met them now, and very helpful are his words of sympathy and encouragement, and his counsels born of long experience.

Together, they bring their difficulties to the LORD in prayer. Together, they talk over the best way of working their stations, of helping the native Christians, and reaching the unreached. And in the earnest, loving atmosphere of that consecrated band, one feels a new inspiration to service, and a deepened faith in the wonder-working power of GOD whose strength is "made perfect in weakness."

Much lies behind this scene. Only four years previously there had been no missionaries on the Kwang-sin river. No Christians were baptised at any of the stations except Yuh-shan, and nothing was being done among the women. How was the change brought about? The story is well worth recording, illustrating, as it does, the place and power of woman's work for the spread of the Gospel in inland China.

Back in the summer of 1866 the large and important province of KIANG-SI had received its first missionary, when the Rev. V. C. Hart, of an American Methodist Society, settled at Kiu-kiang on the Yang-tsi, its extreme northern border. In December 1869

SKETCH MAP showing the KWANG-SIN RIVER.

he was followed by Mr. Cardwell, of the China Inland Mission, who was the first widely to itinerate amongst its populous towns and cities.*

Meanwhile, far away in the eastern extremity of the province, where the Kwang-sin river rises among the mountains of that picturesque borderland, the LORD had also been working, gathering out a people for Himself.

The beautiful Ts'ien-tang, flowing eastward through

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* See Chapter VII.

CHEH-KIANG to the sea, rises in the same watershed. Up its rapid course Heralds of the Glad Tidings had made their way to Kiu-chau, a large city near the KIANG-SI border. Here Dr. and Mrs. Douthwaite settled in 1875, and commenced a Medical Mission, whose fame spread far and wide, drawing hundreds to Kiu-chau, who thus heard the Gospel for the first time. Among those attracted was an old man, who had for many years been employed as a Buddhist missionary, and had travelled extensively in KIANG-SI and elsewhere, winning converts to his faith. The story of his conversion and subsequent work, closely linked with the matter before us, are given as follows, by Dr. Douthwaite:—

CAPTAIN YU YUH-SHAN.

"During the T'ai-ping rebellion, an officer named Yu Yuh-shan, in the service of the Imperial Government, was stationed in Ning-po, in command of a company of soldiers, and while there, was attracted by the preaching of the missionaries. How much he understood of Christian doctrine I am unable to say, but what he did understand made a lasting impression upon his mind. At the close of the rebellion the army was, to a large extent, disbanded; and Captain Yu, being one of the officers no longer needed, was cashiered—or, more probably, dismissed without cash, as is the usual custom—and had to seek other employment. Having the misfortune to be a scholar, it was *infra dig.* to work at any trade; so he purchased a few medical works, studied the ancient methods of writing prescriptions, put on the indispensable spectacles and commenced practice as a full-fledged physician!

"Yu was naturally very religious; but having no faith in idolatry, he joined a sect of reformed Buddhists, who oppose image worship. He had that true missionary spirit which makes a man fearless in trying to constrain others to believe what he himself knows to be true. His religion was everything to him, and, holding with all his heart the doctrines of the sect he had joined, he asked permission of the chief men to go out as their accredited agent and win converts wherever he could. He would receive no salary, but travelled on foot, and lived on the food given him as he went from house to house preaching his new doctrines. His earnestness, coupled with his gentlemanly bearing, gave him influence with the people wherever he went, and ere long he had enrolled the names of thousands of converts in all parts of CHEH-KIANG, and over the border in KIANG-SI. He continued this itinerant work for several years, and then settled in the city of Kin-hwa, and resumed his medical practice.

"Here I found him, in 1875, and here, after regularly attending our daily services for about a year, convinced of the truth of Christianity, he asked for baptism, adding,—

"'I believe that what you tell me of the GOD of heaven is true, and that all my preaching for the last twenty years has been vain.'

"Not long afterwards he was taken very ill. During his hours of pain the LORD drew near his spirit, and when Dr. Yu recovered he was a new man, his soul on fire with enthusiasm for the faith and preaching of CHRIST.

"'I have led hundreds on the wrong road, and now I want to lead them in the way of truth,' he entreated. 'Let me go out to preach. I ask no wages; I do not want your money. I only seek to serve the LORD JESUS.'

"We bade him God-speed, and sent him off to the province of KIANG-SI. Three weeks later he returned, bringing with him one of his former converts, a stout, jolly-

looking old farmer, Liang-hsi, from over the border, who seemed almost wild with delight. As soon as he saw me he fell down on his knees, bumped his head on the floor,* and exclaimed,—

"'I have been for forty years seeking the Truth, and only now have found it—found it through you.'

"He was literally beside himself with joy; another of China's many seekers after GOD, dissatisfied with idolatry, and groping in the darkness like the blind!

"'I want to be baptised at once,' he continued.

"'Venerable father, that cannot be; we must know a little more about you first.'

"'No,' he replied, 'I must be baptised now. I am an old man. I have come three days' journey, and may never be able to do it again. I must be baptised now before I go back.'

"'But we must inquire into your antecedents somewhat before you become a member of the Church.'

"'No, teacher; I am ready. I believe everything you say, and there is no reason why I should not be baptised."

"I did not see any reason myself, so I baptised him, and he went back rejoicing that he had found the Saviour.

"Later on he did come back again, bringing six or seven of his neighbours, also resolved to give up idolatry and become Christians, having heard the Gospel from his lips. After a few months' testing I had the joy of receiving them all into the Church, and later on nine others through their influence.

"Then I took a journey myself into that district, to see how they were getting on.

"At one place *en route* an old man came to see me at the inn.

* See Chapter I., on the *Koh-t'eo*.

"'I have heard about JESUS,' he remarked after the usual salutations, 'from one of your disciples.'

"I supposed he meant Dr. Yu.

"'I have heard them talk of JESUS,' he continued, 'and I want to know more about Him.'

"'I will do all in my power to tell you,' said I, and began to explain the Gospel to him very simply. By-and-by he shook his head, as the Chinese do when they can't understand.

"'It is no use,' he said sadly; 'for forty years I have been a devotee in a Buddhist temple. For forty years I have been sitting in front of idols, worshipping them—nothing else; and now I am become as wooden-headed as the idols themselves. I cannot understand what you say. But,' he added, a gleam of light crossing his wrinkled features, 'I understand this much; you say there is only one GOD?"

"'Yes.'

"'And you say there is only one Saviour—JESUS His name?'

"'Yes.'

"'And you say we are all sinners, but JESUS can save us from our sins and take us to heaven?'

"'Yes; perfectly true.'

"'Well,' he said slowly, '*I understand that.*'

"'Cling to it, old grandfather!' said I. 'Just stick to that; and if you never understand anything more it is enough.'

"'What!' he said, 'do you think if I don't understand any more about it JESUS will save me?'

"'Yes, I am sure He will.'

"He grasped it, and went away rejoicing. Eight months later we received him into the Church; and 'wooden-headed' though he was, he was a bright and shining light in that dark city.

"Thus the work spread through old Dr. Yu, where, as yet, no missionary had been. Journeying and preaching, and carrying his own bed, as many do in China, he met a young farmer one day, going to Yuh-shan, who volunteered kind-heartedly to carry his bundle for him. Of course old Yu preached to him as they went along, urging him to give up idolatry and believe in CHRIST; and ere they parted he gave him a New Testament, with the request that he would read it carefully. Young Tung went home some twenty miles to Ta-yang, fully convinced of the truth of the Gospel, and straightway began himself to preach. When I visited him there, nine months later, I found that every man and woman in the village had heard the Gospel through him, and for thirty miles round many of the peasants had also been reached. Every evening he used to gather the members of the clan round him, read to them, and try to teach them to sing out of the hymn-book they possessed. He could not himself sing a note, nor could any of the others, but they managed to make a noise; and as it was truly 'from heart' no doubt GOD accepted it—a sweeter note of praise than from many a great cathedral anthem.

"His brother, who was about to be married, told me that he and his bride and both the families desired a Christian ceremony, as they would have no more idolatrous practices. I consented to marry them, and the rite was performed before a large company of onlookers. Next year I baptised fifteen in that village.

"Our friend Yu Yuh-shan has long since gone to be with the LORD, whose service was his delight. But the seed he sowed is still springing up and bearing fruit."

So the good work began in the neighbourhood of Yuh-shan, as it has done in many another populous Chinese centre, through young native converts.

During the next five years all went on quietly, the most marked advance being the renting of a little chapel in the suburbs of Yuh-shan, and the appointment of a resident native helper. Dr. and Mrs. Douthwaite, leaving Kiu-chau in 1880 were succeeded by Mr. and Mrs. Randall and Miss Boyd, and these again in 1885 by Mr. and Mrs. David Thompson. Yuh-shan, over the border, had about fifty converts at this time, but no missionary.

Meanwhile there had arrived in China, at the close of 1884, a missionary party of ladies who had been led to consecrate themselves to the work through Mr. McCarthy's meetings. It was a remarkable group, as later years have shown—including Miss Murray, Miss M. Murray, Mrs. Arthur and Mrs. Cecil Polhill Turner, then both unmarried, a band of four young Glasgow workers, Misses Mackintosh, Gray, McFarlane, and Gibson, and a young English lady, Miss Lily Webb, all of whom are still in connection with the Mission. There was a little difficulty as to where they should go to study the language, for we had no homes at that time for receiving and training newly arrived helpers, either men or women. The first few weeks were spent at Chin-kiang, and then it was decided that they should go up to Yang-chau,* where during several busy and happy months

* This city had recently been re-occupied as a station of the Mission. For eighteen months the work there had been given up to another Society. But, as they were unable to carry it on, the C I. M. resumed the premises on January 1st, 1883.

they worked at the language and made friends amongst the people.

Kiu-chau, where old Yu was converted, was the destination of two of these ladies, Miss Mackintosh and Miss Gibson, who in the autumn of 1885 went up to help Mr. and Mrs. Thompson in that city. They soon found plenty to do studying the language, teaching in the girls' school, visiting the women, and hearing a good deal about the out-station, over the border, where the dear native Christians were still without a missionary.

In the spring, Miss Gibson, who was needing rest, went for change to Ch'ang-shan, one of Dr. Douthwaite's first out-stations, charmingly situated at no great distance. The little group of Christians here were all men, and many of them had to endure much persecution from the women of their families, who were strongly opposed to the Gospel. Miss Gibson spent a week amongst them, the women flocking to see her; and instead of rest she had a specially busy time, making friends, and telling of JESUS. Many were impressed, and begged her to stay; and the men subscribed of their own accord ten dollars—a large sum for the Chinese—to put the mission-house in order, so that ladies might be able to come and live there and carry on the work.

The opening seemed a good one, but how could it be used? How could young sisters go alone to take charge of a station in this way? Such a thing had never been attempted in China. "Impossible," people said. But the time was not far off.

A few weeks later Mr. Hudson Taylor, with the Misses Murray and some other friends, came on a missionary journey down the Kwang-sin river, to the Po-yang lake. Miss Mackintosh and Miss Gibson joined them at Kiu-chau, and together they crossed the border to Yuh-shan. The conviction that woman's work might be much developed in China had long been in Mr. Taylor's mind. He believed it possible for sisters to live with perfect safety, as Miss Gibson had done at Ch'ang-shan, among native Christians, where no foreigners were residing. And he thought the Kwang-sin river out-stations would make a good beginning.

At Yuh-shan they found a little company of Christians, but the work in a declining state. At Ho-k'eo no baptisms had yet taken place, and nothing had been done for the women. Farther down stream they passed the city of Ih-yang, and prayed that GOD would open a station there, for the crowds attracted by their arrival seemed specially rough and boisterous. Still farther on, at Kwei-k'i, they witnessed the baptism of the first convert, but found of course nothing doing for the women. Many other cities were passed, in none of which was there any missionary. And very earnest were the prayers of that little party day by day, that GOD would make a way for women evangelists in this region. Here were the native converts—sheep, but without a shepherd. Here were hundreds of thousands of unreached heathen for whom none had ever cared. And here were loving

labourers who had been used of GOD to seek and find many a lost one in the home-lands. Might they not do the work and fill the sphere?

They were not men?

No; only women! But so long as the lost are found and brought within the shelter of the fold, does it matter much who finds them—shepherd or shepherdess?

These missionaries thought not. To them one question only seemed supreme—How shall the Gospel be preached "to every creature" now in KIANG-SI? It was clear there were only women to do the work. But would not He whose Messiahship had been proclaimed by the woman of Samaria, He who had commissioned a woman to carry the tidings of His resurrection, He who called Priscilla to instruct Apollos in the faith, and whose SPIRIT endowed the women who were Paul's fellow-labourers, and Philip's four daughters, with the gift of prophecy, would not He use the women who were here, equally willing, equally believing, equally His?

They thought so, and were not mistaken.

After much prayer and consideration, it was decided that Miss Webb and Miss Gray should begin work on the lower river, Miss Mackintosh at Yuh-shan, and Miss Byron at Ch'ang-shan.

Together they set out from the Po-yang lake on their return journey, with only native escorts, a little party of four. Unknown experiences awaited them, with the certainty of many difficulties, much hardship,

loneliness, and responsibility. They were young and new to the work, and had to make their way among the native Christians and the heathen, and settle down as the LORD might guide. It was a brave experiment.

In June 1886 they started, and travelled and evangelised till the autumn, staying longer or shorter times at various points, as they were able. After the first few weeks the feasibility of the plan was proved, and from that time women's work has gone on steadily in KIANG-SI.

Miss Webb and Miss Gray, on the lower part of the river, made Ho-k'eo and Kwei-k'i their headquarters, living a good deal in boats, and itinerating widely. It was hard work at first, as foreign women had very rarely been seen in all that district before, and excitement was intense on their appearing. Often the question was, "Are they really women?"

Mute with terror, one villager vanished into her house on seeing them, and returned with an old lady wide-eyed, and rake in hand to meet any possible attack! On the river, guests crowded by the score into their little house-boat.

"*Not few*," remarked the boat-woman one morning as she brought in tea for their thronging visitors.

Ashore, friendly women volunteered to guide them through the townships, calling out their ages and business, and a good deal of the Gospel story in advance, as they went from house to house, urging,

as fresh groups were reached, "Tell them too! Tell them too!"

Crowds, sometimes too excited to listen to their message, had to be faced in silence—the foreign feminine folk sitting still, while every detail of their dress and appearance was openly discussed. Sometimes a tea-shop owner would invite them to sit down, and provide badly needed refreshment; as often, however, politely requesting them to retire when the throng became unwieldy. Mandarins occasionally were moved to "exhort the people to be quiet," and did their best to look after the notable strangers, often not more effectually than Miss Lily Webb describes:—

"In the streets of Ih-yang Hien we certainly made a great impression on the people. Many followed us. The town was busy and crowded, and we had to thread our way among throngs of coolies. *After we had returned to the boat* the mandarin sent down a paper to say he would protect us! . . . "

"I only wish," she continues, "that he knew of the one Great Protector who is with us always." It was a mighty reality, that protection, in their lives! And GOD used, as well as kept them.

"You are all so good; I love you all!" exclaimed one poor woman of eighty-eight as she held their hands.

"How do you worship this true GOD? Can I do it too?" eagerly asked another.

Miss Gray, kneeling down, prayed with her, amid

deep silence. Shutting her eyes, and putting her hands together, the questioner continued after a few minutes, "Is this the way I can worship Him? I am afraid I shall forget all you have told me; will you write it down, so that I can get some one at home to read it to me?"

"They always listen so anxiously," wrote Miss Webb, "to know if the good news is really for *them*."

It was worth while, in such work, putting up with

STATION, HO-K'EO, KIANG-SI.

(*Drawn by J. T. Reid.*)

difficulties and poor accommodation. The Ho-k'eo house, of which a sketch is affixed, was—

"Not very delightful," wrote Mrs Randall, on a visit some time previously. "It has just one large room in the roof, close to the tiles, and no ceiling. The partition walls between it and the next house are only bamboo, plastered with mud, and various small holes grew very large on our arrival—made by the next-door neighbours, who were anxious to acquaint themselves with us and our ways. The only way of access is by a very steep ladder and a hole in the floor. Our women visitors do not, however, appear to mind this much. To-day I have had at least a hundred up. . . . Now and then a man comes to have a peep, or carries a child up to its mother, doubtless making the best of the opportunity secured by his unselfish service!"

Mandarins were equally anxious to see the foreign ladies; and at military Yamens they were treated with great attention by the Chinese officials and ladies, one group of whom besought them to come every day, urging, "Do tell us; we have never heard this Gospel, and we should like to know!"

Some who had never heard were weary waiting.

"One very old woman," wrote Miss Webb, "looked at us wonderingly, as we gently told her of the love of CHRIST. Sadly, she shook her head, as if to say it was too late for her.

"'If you believe in JESUS it is not too late,' we urged. And tears rolled down her withered cheeks as she repeated the words herself."

Amid such needs they laboured, and the work goes on to-day.

Meanwhile Miss Mackintosh had reached Yuh-shan, and after a summer spent in getting to know the Christians, visiting the villages, and finding her way into many hearts and homes among the people, she settled in the city in January 1887, undertaking the regular work of the station, with Chang Sien-seng as native pastor.

There, in the old house upon the busy street—chapel below and crowded little rooms above—she lived alone with this good man and his family. Early difficulties and trials they met together, in faith and prayer. It was singularly difficult at first. Crowds and terrors, evil reports, unfriendliness, and suspicion surrounded the foreign lady. No houses were open to her, except those of the Christians, and amongst them there was a good deal of coldness, jealousy, and lack of light and love. But patiently they went through the dark and difficult times, learning to understand one another and the people, and by faith to overcome. Very skilfully and wisely Miss Mackintosh faced the problem of her post—how to work with a native pastor, really leading, and yet keeping in the background, so that he should seem to lead. And through the grace of GOD she solved it with marked success.

"Chang Sien-seng," she would say of him, "is a grave, quiet, warm-hearted man; simple and sincere as a child, but with much wisdom and experience. The people love him; and his dear wife and children are all a help in the work. I never do anything

without consulting him; and the consequence is, that he is equally open with me, and we share all the burdens together. The people are aware of this. They know he tells me everything, and that I always seek his advice, whatever the question may be. I find it is helpful in the church. They understand that we are thoroughly of one mind about everything."

By degrees the early difficulties passed away. The gentle, loving spirit of the foreign lady made itself felt; women of all classes gathered round her; homes were opened to her on every hand; a valued colleague came to join her, Miss Tapscott, now Mrs. Frederick Steven; and six months after that January beginning, there were thirty-two candidates for baptism, eighteen of whom were received into the church.

After these first baptisms Chang Sieng-seng went on to the stations farther down the river, where similar blessing had attended the work of the other sisters. Miss Gibson was in charge at Ho-k'eo, and at Kwei-k'i* Mr. Hudson Taylor's daughter, now Mrs. Coulthard, was living. In both these places there were baptisms—twenty-six in all; the Christians and native helpers were growing in grace; efforts on behalf of the women were rapidly developing; and the Gospel was being carried to the surrounding districts, where several promising out-stations were already springing up.

* Miss McFarlane had worked there previously, spending the winter '87-'88 alone amongst the people, with great blessing.

Six years have passed since those initial days, and the work has gone on steadily, until now there is, perhaps, no more fruitful sphere in China than the Kwang-sin river. The stations and out-stations number seventeen; the lady workers thirty-four; the native helpers thirty-eight; and the Christians between three and four hundred; while on all hands there are increasing prospects of blessing.

As a training ground for the young sisters upon leaving Yang-chau, this district has proved invaluable. Many in the commencement of their missionary life, under the loving influence and devoted example of these brave workers in their busy stations, have learned how to reach the hearts of the people, and commend the Gospel among them.

The missionary ladies, here, seem just like one large family. Their stations are interdependent, and both natives and foreigners are bound together by ties of sympathy and love. Miss Mackintosh and Miss Gibson, at Yuh-shan and Ho-k'eo, bear upon their mother-hearts the details of all the stations, and give the counsel and encouragement that younger helpers need.

Of course the work of these ladies, and the policy of the Mission in allowing it, has been the subject of criticism both in China and at home. It has been objected that young foreign women should not be allowed to expose themselves to the dangers and hardships of such a life; that they cannot really be safe so far inland, without human protection of

any sort; that the responsibilities of such stations are too heavy for them to bear; that the difficulties and emergencies that must come, at times, are too serious; that the impropriety of their living alone in China must be a hindrance to the Gospel; and that it is unsuitable for women to have the responsibility of churches which include men and work on their behalf.

In all this, of course, there is truth; and none feel the difficulties more keenly than those directly engaged in meeting them. But because all is not smooth sailing must we therefore cease our efforts? Besides, are there not compensating advantages of great value?

Trial, loneliness, and some hardships must be met, but those who meet them "learn to lean hard upon the LORD, and find His grace sufficient; learn to live in His own presence, and prove it fulness of joy."

True, there are difficulties at times, and heavy responsibility. But help in all graver questions is at hand, in the Superintendent of the work—now Mr. Orr Ewing, living at Kiu-kiang—and such help will increasingly be given. In the autumn of 1892, Miss Mackintosh was married to H. N. Lachlan, Esq., M.A., who had had four years' experience of missionary life in China. He is now labouring on the Kwang-sin river, and brings much added strength.

True, there are times of danger from excitement amongst the people, but, strong in faith, our sisters remain quietly at their posts, and the native

CHINESE DINNER, IN THE MISSION-HOUSE AT YUH-SHAN.

Christians learn from their example what it is really to trust in the living GOD. Nothing else could be so impressive an object lesson in faith ; for they see the weakness and helplessness of their teachers, and know well that they have no defence but GOD ; and yet see them kept in perfect peace, and know that however much the enemy may threaten, no harm comes to them, GOD being round about them all the time.

It is true that the Chinese do not understand ladies living alone, and that it offends their prejudices. But it is equally strange to them that we should come to China at all, or do anything that a missionary does. If we are not to offend their prejudices, we must stay at home, and certainly no unmarried lady could venture to go amongst them. Our women-workers in KIANG-SI, however, make themselves so thoroughly one with the people, living and dressing as they do, that their position is soon understood and appreciated.

True is it, above all, that women cannot fill the place of men-missionaries in the church ; that they cannot preach and teach as men do, nor hold the same leading position. But herein lies one of the great compensations of their work. For this very inability to take all into their own hands obliges the native Christian men to come forward and bear responsibility themselves. *They* are made to think, and work, and pray, and take the lead, at any rate outwardly, in many matters in which, if a foreign gentleman were there, they would not interfere.

The necessary outcome is a native agency, without one of its most serious drawbacks; for the native helpers have a large measure of supervision, while still left to act upon their own account.

All acquainted with foreign missions realize that this question of native agency is a perplexing one. If left to themselves such helpers may get cold, worldly-minded, or involved in objectionable courses; their influence becomes a serious hindrance in the church; and the evil is difficult to remedy. Pressingly occupied in the central stations, the foreign missionary cannot sufficiently supervise them, and is dependent for his information upon brief visits at considerable intervals—a highly unsatisfactory state of things. Yet native pastors and evangelists are essential to the healthy life of the native Christian Church. If it be vigorous they must appear in its ranks. How is their usefulness to be developed? With judicious help, their efficiency may be doubled. But how shall such help be given? *Men* are all too few to work the central stations. Why should not women, trained and gifted for such service, fill the gap? With their supervision, the native Christians are still left to do their own work, but not alone. The sisters watch over their spiritual life, praying for and with them, and seeking in every way to help them, but they are still themselves responsible for the men's part of the work. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this solution of what many have felt to be a very pressing problem.

Of course much of the usefulness of this method depends upon the wisdom and grace of the women workers. Every lady missionary is not fitted for such a post, just as every one would not be able for the same kind of work at home. But many are. And experience on the Kwang-sin river has proved that such can practically double the usefulness of the native helpers, by their quiet, unobtrusive moral and spiritual influence, and through them do a noble work for the men, as well as personally conducting complementary efforts on behalf of the women. Thus districts in which there are no men missionaries may be thoroughly evangelised, and widely blessed. Would that in every out-station in China where a few native Christians are gathered beyond the reach of any resident missionary, there were such ladies to be found, living among the people, strengthening the native workers, and spreading new life and light.

The rich blessing of GOD has rested upon the experiment made in KIANG-SI. The dear workers themselves, and the Mission to which they belong, have much to learn, and realise more than any others the weak points, difficulties, and drawbacks of the plan; yet they cannot but thank GOD for all that He has wrought through so weak and imperfect an agency. Scores of similar districts are waiting in China—other rivers, towns, villages, other out-stations, and little struggling native churches, needing help. Oh, that it may be more and more recognised that here is a great sphere for the work of consecrated

women, who are not afraid to endure hardness as good soldiers of JESUS CHRIST.

* * * * * *

In this section we have sought to indicate something of the need and darkness of the women of inland China, the experiences of those who have been pioneers in bringing them the Gospel, the way in which that great country is now opened to the work of Christian women, and the pressing call for hundreds of such, as evangelists, for its as yet unreached millions. One question still remains:—

"*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?*"

Within the last ten years GOD has opened inland China to the women of the Church of CHRIST. Is it little that we are face to face with such a fact? What meaning is there for us in the wonderful providences that have brought this continental Empire within our reach? The change these years have made is momentous and significant. What does it mean, dear reader, for you, for me? Alone with these great facts, and GOD, bear with me if I press the question—what difference has it made in *your* life that fifty millions of women in the inland provinces of China are still without the Gospel, though now accessible to us as they were not a few brief years ago?

The time is short, the end is nearing. GOD has brought these myriad homes and hearts within our reach for some great purpose. What are our

responsibilities to Him about it? And how do we discharge them day by day?

Here is the womanhood of a whole mighty nation, to be won for CHRIST. Who would not willingly count all things "loss" for the high honour of fellowship with Him in such a purpose?

Fathers, mothers, do you not want to share this privilege? Will you not spare that dear and gifted daughter, for His sake, at any cost, to become a centre of light and blessing in some distant Chinese city where JESUS is not named?

Dear reader, you who cannot go, could you not support one or more such workers? Not a large sum is needed to maintain a lady in inland China. Could you not have your representatives in the field, follow them with sympathy and prayer, and thus become a sharer in their service and reward?

Busy soul-winner, you who are already used in the LORD'S work at home, have you never heard His call to these white, waiting fields where labourers are so few? Until you definitely give yourself to Him for the women of inland China, can you be quite sure that it is not His purpose to send you there?

WHO ARE THE WOMEN WANTED?

I. Supremely those who know and love the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and in whose life He lives. As McCheyne has well said, "It is not so much great talents that GOD blesses as likeness to Himself." Therefore love, Divine love for GOD and man, and

an entire dependence upon the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, are the first great essentials.

II. Then, those who are sure of the call of GOD. No merely human compassion, or enthusiasm of a missionary meeting, will prove sufficient to carry one through the stress of actual life and work among the heathen. Nothing but a sincere and prayerful conviction that GOD has called to this service, and that every step is according to His will and by His guidance, is enough to produce the steadfastness and full purpose of heart that are absolutely needed.

III. Women ready to toil and suffer; to whom hardships, loneliness, and trial borne for JESUS' sake are sweet. Women prepared, if needs be, to "die daily"; willing "for the Gospel's sake" to deny self, and be made "all things to all men,"—by any means to win some. Hearts ready to say with Paul about many possible comforts and pleasures, right enough in themselves, but a hindrance, it may be, to the fullest usefulness and blessing: "We have not used this power, but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of CHRIST."

IV. Women of loving hearts, who will bring a tender sympathy and sisterly kindness into all their relations with those they go to bless; who will be content with nothing less than really getting into touch with the people, understanding their joys and sorrows, and entering into all their needs. This love must be "without dissimulation," for none are quicker than the Chinese in detecting real devotion. Ready

are they also to meet true love with a warm, grateful response, and wonderful is its transforming influence upon their lives.

V. Women, patient, persevering, hopeful, and strong in faith; who will not weary in well doing, assured that in due season they shall reap.

VI. Women of ripe Christian experience are wanted, whom GOD has been training in His own school of suffering and service at home. Many a younger sister out in the field needs all the help and strengthening they can bring, and great may be the usefulness of such in deepening the spiritual tone of the work. Youth, on the other hand, has all its own advantages, and those who can be trained in China are wanted as no words can tell. Such learn the language and acclimatise more easily, and have less difficulty in adapting themselves to the ways of the people.

VII. Lady doctors, teachers, nurses, all are needed. In a word, whatever GOD has used in His service at home cannot fail to be of value in China also. No matter what your special gift may be, there is certainly a sphere for it there. One talent, five, or ten can equally be put to good account.

And let it never be forgotten that we go to learn as well as teach, to receive as well as give.

In China there are hoary systems of philosophy, religion, and culture; we do not seek to add to these. There is an ancient and complex civilisation that it is not ours to supersede with new ideas from the

West. One thing, supremely, is lacking; one blessing we wish to bring—the knowledge of a Saviour, and a Saviour's love. CHRIST is her paramount need; CHRIST Himself made real to her through human lives.

As missionaries, then, our call is—

to learn CHRIST; to live CHRIST; to give CHRIST

"UNTIL HE COME."

. . . "The sun had set, and as the houses were already shrouded in gloom the strangers could not tell what turn to take, but watched and waited under the silent stars—the first Protestant missionaries that ever stood on Indian soil, wondering much what would happen next, and bethinking themselves that even the Son of Man had not where to lay His head.

"Now that Ziegenbalg has set foot in India and stands bewildered under the stars, we may look at the condition of that tremendous problem which he has set himself to solve, exactly the same problem, moreover, that we are trying to solve to-day. For when we use this phrase, 'winning India,' it is in a prophetic and, as yet, in no way historical sense. It is the heading of a long chapter of which only the opening pages have been written, but of which we have no more doubt that it will be completed, than that it has been begun. It is rather the work before the Church than any work the Church has done. . . . But to win India was Ziegenbalg's aim, the dream he had as he left home, the dream of all that have followed him from Schwartz and Carey down to our own day. We are to look at something larger than the gathering of a few natives, whether they are hundreds or thousands, out of indescribable error and woe. . . . The greatness of the modern mission, as we apprehend it, is in this . . . that it does not recognise any limits short of those which Christ assigned to His Church—the whole world; and that it aims to win for Him the busy life of vast peoples, their existence as nations or races, their polity, their literature and commerce, and all the springs of national being; to change, in fact, and that everywhere, heathenism into Christendom.

"It is this conviction, that they have engaged in a superb and far-reaching enterprise, which lends a pathetic interest to the figures of those two men, as we see rising up beyond them the unbroken heights and fortress of the Hindoo faith; which lends that pathos to every lonely figure that passes out of our sight to-day into any mission-field. The work seems so far beyond the workers, that the faith which lies behind it rises into the highest chivalry."—*The Dawn of the Modern Mission*, FLEMING STEVENSON, D.D.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS.

"China in life's journey fell early among thieves. They wore the philosopher's cloak. They filled its ear with worldly wisdom, and its heart with worldly tastes. And so they robbed it of its birthright, and taught it to mind earthly things.

"It is a noble task to bring to it the title-deeds of the inheritance of which it has been defrauded; to unorphan it, to renew its youth, to bring it through CHRIST to His Father, not less industrious, not less patient, not less enduring, but emptied of emptiness and washed from impurity, the most experienced of all prodigals in wandering, the happiest in its repentance and return. At once the oldest child of Adam, the youngest child of GOD."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE STORY OF THE SEVENTY.

OUR last two chapters have carried us somewhat beyond the point at which we must now resume the Mission's story.

It was the spring of 1878 when Mrs. Hudson Taylor, leaving family and friends, sailed for famine-stricken SHAN-SI, in the hope that very soon her husband might be able to rejoin her. But in the home department there were many claims, and for almost twelve months Mr. Taylor found it impossible to leave.

The Council of the Mission, formed six years previously,* had all along rendered valuable assistance in England, but now the growing sphere and responsibilities of the work made further organisation necessary. Thus in the spring of 1879 months of deliberation and prayer resulted in the appointment of Mr. Benjamin Broomhall as Secretary to the Mission; while Mr. Theodore Howard, Chairman of the Council, consented to assume the responsible position of Home Director, which he still continues to occupy.

* See vol. i., p. 454.

The story of the Inland Mission would be sadly incomplete did it lack a tribute to the painstaking, devoted, and unwearied service of our long-tried and valued helpers at home. It is no small thing that the Director and members of Council, busy, most of them, in the rush of London life, should be willing, year by year, to devote one evening nearly every week to the affairs of the Mission. It is no small thing that they should consecrate to its well-being so much earnest thought and prayerful sympathy; their only reward the grateful appreciation of all connected with the work, and the Master's word, "Ye did it unto Me." Long may every member of our beloved and honoured London Council be spared to continue this valuable service!

To those acquainted with the Mission, Mr. and Mrs. Broomhall need no introduction. It is enough to mention their names. All that have come under their loving influence at once fill in the rest. Since 1876 Mr. Broomhall has been the mainspring of the busy, toilsome office work at Pyrland Road, for two and a half years informally, and for the last fourteen as recognised head. His genial presence and sympathy, and those of his devoted wife,* have made the C. I. M headquarters a home in the truest sense. Not only have they there brought up their own children, four of whom have joined the Mission in China, but their hospitable welcome has ever been extended to

* Mr. Hudson Taylor's sister.

those interested in the work, to returned missionaries, and out-going candidates, large numbers of whom have been received into their family circle and helped by them in ways too numerous to detail. Mrs. Broomhall, in spite of her household cares, has regularly kept up the midday prayer-meeting for China, and undertaken the outfits of scores of departing missionaries, amongst whom the writer, with many others, can never cease gratefully to remember the motherly tenderness and sympathy she blended with all her helpful counsels. From full hearts we say, "The LORD reward them!"

Strengthened by these arrangements, Mr. Taylor was liberated to return to China early in 1879. On his way out to the East an invitation from the Hague led to his visiting Holland. Interesting meetings were held there, and at Amsterdam and Marseilles, the C. I. M. thus becoming known on the Continent for the first time. This small beginning, fourteen years ago, is interesting in the light of recent developments which have brought into our ranks many valuable workers from Germany, Norway, Sweden, and even Finland.

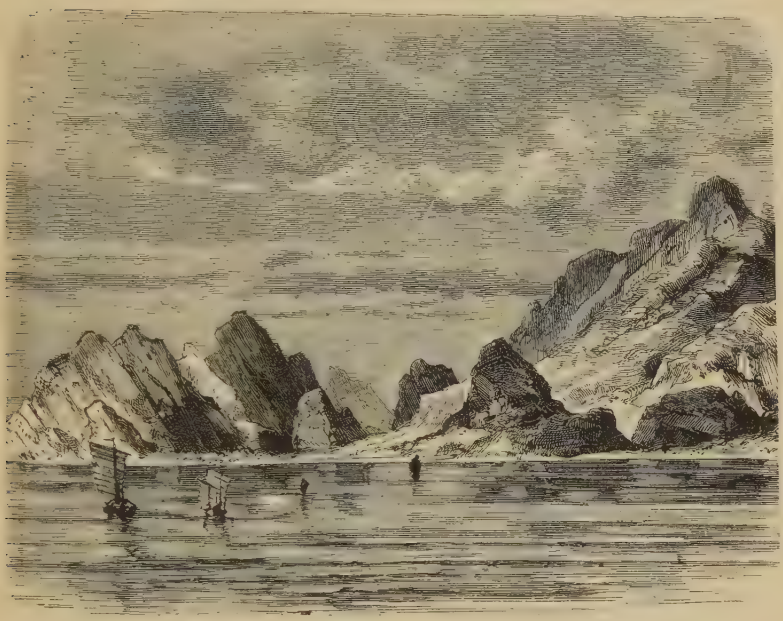
Upon landing in China Mr. Hudson Taylor and his companions were met by Mrs. Taylor, amongst others, who had come down from SHAN-SI to rejoin her husband. He was now very ill, and before long his life was almost despaired of. As a last resort, his medical advisers sent him to Chefoo. Kindly received

by Christian friends in the Settlement, he spent the summer at that pleasant health-resort, greatly benefited by the bracing air. A further result of his visit was the establishment at Chefoo of the C. I. M. sanatorium and schools. Beautifully situated close to the sea, these, with Dr. Douthwaite's large medical work, form a combination of needed and healthful agencies that have proved of incalculable benefit to the Mission.*

By degrees, as Mr. Taylor regained strength, he was able to visit the stations along the Yang-tsi valley, and take part in forwarding the pioneer journeys of our women-evangelists, who were just beginning to go to the far Interior, as described in the last section.

It was a time of rapid progress and advance—1879 to 1880. At the older stations blessing was being given, and new and important openings were to be found on every hand. Both the sphere and staff of the Mission were larger than ever before, seventy stations in eleven provinces, being occupied by seventy missionaries and twenty-six missionaries' wives, and

* The Sanatorium accommodates from twenty to twenty-five visitors, and the schools about sixty boys and forty girls respectively. The children of our own Mission can here be educated free of charge, and in addition the children of other foreign residents are received. The educational standard is high, and the moral and spiritual tone of the schools excellent. All the teaching and direction are supplied by members of the Mission, who have willingly consecrated their special gifts to this service.



THE BLUFF, NEAR CHEFOO.

widespread itinerations were being carried on in districts where as yet no workers were settled. Still, though there was much to cheer and encourage, it was also a period of unusual trial. Mr. Taylor's life seemed more than once in the balance; a diminished income caused grave financial difficulty; and at the same time reinforcements were badly needed in every province.

Four years had now elapsed since the Chefoo Convention; and their experience had proved that China was indeed open to the Gospel. Journeys had

been freely taken throughout the hitherto unreached Interior, and not men only, but ladies, were now settled in the far West. Surely it was a time for advance and redoubled effort! Yet, sad to say, the work was being seriously retarded, as it seemed, for lack of men and means.

As 1880 passed away much prayer was made about the pressing need, which seemed all the more painful in view of the wide and increasing opportunities that abounded in districts so long closed to the Gospel. Throughout the following year similar conditions prevailed; and in the autumn of 1881, as many of the missionaries as possible gathered to meet Mr. Hudson Taylor at Wu-ch'ang for prayer and conference.

This great and important city, far in the heart of China, was then, as it still is, a centre of widely extended aristocratic, literary, and official influences. Its walls, twelve miles in circumference, enclose handsome buildings, pagodas, temples, and official residences of all sorts. Wealthy, busy, and populous, Wu-ch'ang—with its full tide of life ever flowing, like the rolling waters of the Yang-tsi, at its feet—took but little notice of the handful of strangers who had found a home within its gates. Three or four missionary households represented various Societies at work in the city, while the C. I. M. had a house of call, specially for the convenience of travellers bound for the Interior. Here it was that in November 1881 the little group of C. I. M. workers united to wait

upon the LORD, seeking labourers for the great harvest. Above them the blue skies of HU-PEH, around them the noise and turmoil of a vast heathen metropolis, within their hearts the righteousness, peace, and joy of the inner Kingdom of GOD, they gathered there amid all the superstition, idolatry, and practical infidelity of paganism, a band of men and women who believed in prayer.

On the steep slope of a low ridge of hills running through the city, picture the modest Chinese dwelling, surrounded by narrow, crowded, dirty streets. Within is the guest-hall, with its raised daïs, small square tea-tables, and straight-backed Chinese chairs down either side, its walls hung with brightly coloured scrolls in Chinese character. Here, and in the smaller sitting-room, the daily meetings were held. From the window a magnificent view of the city lies outspread below—whitewashed walls and crowded, sloping roofs, right down to the banks of the swiftly flowing Yang-tsi, and across to the foreign settlement and populous native city of Hankow on the further shore. On the wall of the sitting-room, amongst other texts was one that seemed strangely appropriate to that little conference :—

"*Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the* LORD *I will joy in the* GOD *of my salvation.*"

Those were earnest days of waiting upon GOD, and His presence was very real. The whole position of the Mission, and the principles upon which it was based, were prayerfully reviewed.

"The LORD is giving us happy fellowship here," wrote Mr. Taylor, "and is confirming us in the principles on which we are acting. We are indeed rich in His presence and love. Both are so real. Are they not? Our LORD has a great heart of love, as well as an arm of strength for us to lean upon and be enfolded in."

And all the while as they prayed, and rejoiced in GOD, in spite of shortness of funds and lack of workers, the background of ever-present thought in every heart was the great Beyond of need and darkness in the still unevangelised though accessible interior of the vast Empire.

"GOD is rich and great," they say; "He has opened to us doors of access on all hands in this once-sealed land. The needs are overwhelming; the opportunities wonderful! *How is it that the labourers are so few?*"

"You have been very definite in faith and prayer for an entrance into all the unreached provinces," the answer seemed to come, "but have you sought in the same way the reinforcements needed to fill each place as it was given?"

And here there was a consciousness of failure. Prayer had not been as definite for workers as for openings, and a deep sense of responsibility was felt by all to seek in this respect also great things from GOD.

True, funds were short, and the Mission staff already large. But face to face with such needs, and such a GOD, even that could not hinder! And so these men and women rose from their knees with strengthened faith and enlarged desire, feeling that they must be definite in their request for more labourers.

Then came the question, "For how many shall we ask? What is exactly the need? What are we to expect from GOD?"

"There are several ways," writes Mr. Taylor, in this connection, "of working for GOD. We may make the wisest plans we can, and then carry them out to the best of our ability. This is perhaps better than working without any plan, but it is by no means the best way to serve our Master.

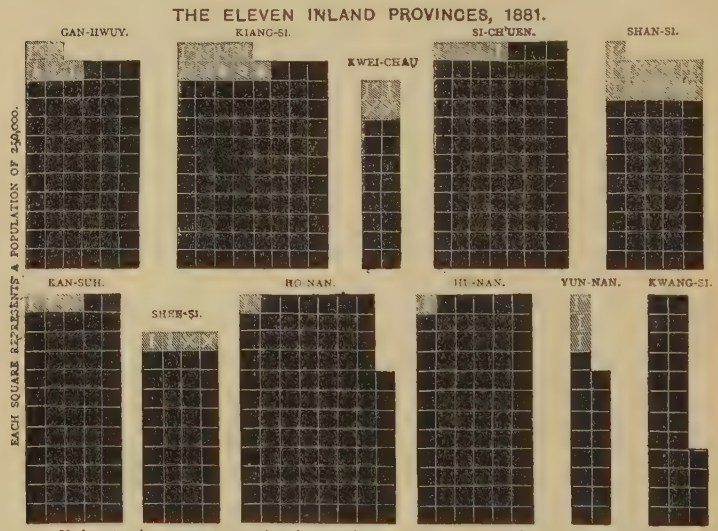
"Or, having carefully laid our plans and determined to carry them through, we may bring them to GOD, and ask Him to help and prosper us in connection with them.

"Yet another way is to *begin* with GOD, and to ask *His* plans, and offer ourselves to Him to help in carrying them out."

Deeply feeling the importance of beginning thus with GOD, the little band first sought His guidance as to what they should expect, before making any definite petitions. Then, taking a sheet of paper—too familiar with the land of their love and adoption to need any map—they went over, province by province, the whole of their wide field, the great far-reaching country lying around them on every hand.

Station by station all the workers were named—one little band far off in KAN-SUH; a group of three lonely toilers in SHEN-SI, and a mother's quiet grave; one station for SI-CH'UEN; one in KWEI-CHAU; and a single lonely outpost at Ta-li Fu in YUN-NAN. West of them that was all: five stations in five provinces, stretching from the borders of Mongolia to the mountains of Burmah and Thibet, a region larger far than England, Ireland, Scotland, France, and Italy, and with a population of thirty-nine millions at the very least.

To north and south of them lay other vast regions:



If these provinces were represented as they were in 1865, every square in the above diagrams would be in dark shading, for in the whole of them there was not one resident Protestant missionary. To indicate the progress made since 1865, a square in lighter shading is allowed for each missionary. The marks on the squares indicate

Missionary of the China Inland Mission. Missionary of other societies. Unmarried lady of the China Inland Mission.

Missionary and wife of do. Missionary and wife of do. Do. of other Missions.

towards the Great Wall two provinces larger than the States of New York, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, put together, with a population of twenty-four millions, and only three little stations: southward to the Tong-king Gulf, two more, as far-reaching as Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and half Ohio, peopled with twenty millions of heathen, and amongst them only one evangelist, with no settled dwelling-place. East of them, were two more inland provinces, larger than New Zealand and Wales twice over, with a population of twenty-four millions, and only three stations where Protestant missionaries were at work. And eastward still, the sea-board provinces, best off of any, but dark and unevangelised in parts, were also badly needing labourers.

Province by province was gone over by these men and women, waiting to know what GOD would have them ask of Him in faith; and as they talked and pondered their hearts were burdened with the vast, the overwhelming need!

Station by station was named, and a note made of the reinforcements absolutely required for each one, if the older work were to be sustained and some advance attempted.

The list grew long.

"For this unentered province at least two men. To reinforce the Clarkes alone at Ta-li Fu certainly one brother and his wife. For the great openings in SI-CH'UEN some one must be given. And for these older stations, where the baptisms have been numerous

of late and the young converts need loving help and supervision, we badly want men and women of grace and power." Thus the needs were reckoned, and written down before the LORD.

At last they came to an end, and then the list was counted. What a total! Twenty-eight women were wanted and forty-two men—seventy in all. How few it seemed compared to the great field! And yet, *seventy* for this one Mission! How dared they dream of asking such a number? Poor, uninfluential, with no denomination at their back, how could the C. I. M., at that time but little known in England, and without connections in any other part of the world, venture to plead such a petition for reinforcements? Seventy men and women? Why, their whole staff was under a hundred—the growth of fifteen years. How could they think of asking seventy more, when their funds were already short, their friends few, their circle small! What a prayer—looked at from any point of view! Yes, except from the standing ground of *faith* it did seem preposterous. And yet, there was the need, and here were all the promises of GOD. They had asked Him to teach them what to pray for as they ought. Could they, dared they tone down their petitions to any level lower than the need? He had been with them as they travelled, in thought, to all those stations. He knew every word upon that paper was true. Dared they ask *less*, for fear He would not, could not, give?

It was GOD'S plan that lay before them. And with

the petition based upon the need, He gave faith for claiming the supply.

"We then and there determined," wrote Mr. Taylor, "daily to plead with GOD in agreed prayer for seventy additional workers, forty-two men and twenty-eight women for our own Mission, and for large reinforcements for all the evangelical Societies."

Conscious of the greatness of their request, and of the very limited powers of the Mission both at home and in China, the Conference realised at once that they could not receive such reinforcements in any brief space of time. There would not be strength enough in the home staff to send out so large a number in one season. Nor could the available accommodation near the coast in China be adapted to receive them. Escorts, too, for the long journeys inland were none too easily obtained. It would be needful, therefore, that the new workers should come out in relays, with a few months' interval, so that the first arrivals might learn enough of the language to travel farther inland, and those escorting them might have time to return for succeeding parties. It seemed, however, that a period of three years would be long enough to admit of all being satisfactorily accomplished. So the prayer was for seventy workers, to be given during the next three years—1882, '83, '84.

It was certainly no superfluity of funds that encouraged those men and women to pray. They had been passing through a time of severe trial in this respect.

"But," wrote Mr. Taylor, "we felt that if GOD saw it needful to try our faith, He could do so, whether we were seventy more or seventy less; and if He were pleased to supply us abundantly, the additional Seventy would be no difficulty to HIM. We had not fixed arbitrarily upon the number, and then distributed them over our stations. We had been led to ask for so many, seeing they were all needed. And it was cheering to remember that the LORD who had sent forth 'other seventy,' to assist the twelve disciples in little Palestine, could easily give us the same number for great, needy China.

"As to their support, the GOD who had found no difficulty in sustaining in the wilderness the millions of Israel, was not likely to feel burdened with the care of a few extra workers for inland China. His arm had not waxed short. There was no fear that we should all have to become vegetarians! The cattle on a thousand hills, and all the fowls of the air, are His. And were the currency of the whole world to fail or be insufficient, He has abundance of unmined stores of silver and gold. We can afford to be poor with so rich a Father. So we agreed to pray.'

It was with great confidence and joy that, on the afternoon of November 25th, 1881, the friends in the Mission-house at Wu-ch'ang knelt together to spread out their petitions before the LORD. Around them on every hand stretched the far-reaching continental Empire to which they longed to bring the Gospel; before them lay the memorable paper with its record of their pressing need; above them bent the Hearer and Answerer of prayer, and their hearts overflowed with the gladness and certainty of a God-inspired faith, that it should be unto them according to their desire.

Gathered at the tea-table, a little later, some one said :—

"How delightful it would be if all who have joined in the petition for reinforcements to-day, could meet to give thanks in three years' time, when the last of the Seventy shall have reached China." Clearly that could not be. How scattered would that group be found, long before that time!

"Why not to-night?" suggested another. "Why not have a thanksgiving service this very evening, in which we may all unite?"

And so it was. Every one present at the prayer meeting was also present to give thanks, rejoicing in confident faith.

Then they drew up a petition, laying this request for prayer before the home Churches. It was sent first for signature to the scattered members of the mission in China, and ran thus :–

"We, the undersigned members of the C. I. M., having had the privilege of personally labouring in many of the provinces of this needy land, and having seen with our own eyes something of its extent, and of the great spiritual needs of the untold millions of its inhabitants, feel pressed in spirit to make a united appeal to the Churches of the living God in Great Britain and Ireland for earnest and persevering prayer for more labourers.

"We saw with thankfulness a few years ago the generous sympathy called forth by a knowledge of the terrible famine for bread that perisheth in the northern provinces. Some of us personally took part in distributing the practical fruits of this sympathy among the needy and dying. Many

lives were saved; many hungry were fed; many naked were clothed; and needy, destitute children were taken and cared for, some of whom are still under Christian instruction.

"A more widespread and awful famine for the Bread of Life exists to-day in every province in China. Souls on every hand are perishing for lack of knowledge. A thousand every hour are passing away into death and darkness. We and many others have been sent by GOD and by the Churches to minister the Bread of Life to these perishing ones, but our number collectively is utterly inadequate to the crying needs around us.

"Provinces in China compare in area with kingdoms in Europe, and average between ten and twenty millions in population. One province has no missionary. Another has only one, an unmarried man. In each of two other provinces only one missionary and his wife are resident. And none are sufficiently supplied with labourers. Can we leave matters thus, without incurring the sin of blood-guiltiness?

"We plead, then, with the Churches of GOD at home to unite with us in fervent, effectual prayer, that the LORD of the Harvest may thrust forth more labourers into His harvest, in connection with every Protestant Missionary Society on both sides of the Atlantic.

"A careful survey of the spiritual work to which we ourselves are called, as members of the C. I. M., has led us to feel the importance of immediate and large reinforcements; and many of us are daily pleading with GOD in agreed prayer for forty-two additional men and twenty-eight additional women, called and sent out by Himself to assist us in carrying on and extending the work committed to our charge.

"We ask our brothers and sisters in CHRIST at home to join us in praying the LORD of the Harvest to thrust out this 'other seventy also.'

"We are not anxious as to means for sending them forth or sustaining them. He has told us to look at the birds and flowers, and to take no thought for these things; to seek first the Kingdom of GOD and His righteousness, and that all these shall be added unto us. But we *are* concerned that only men and women called of GOD, fully consecrated to Him, and counting every precious thing as dross 'for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS our LORD,' should come out to join us. And we would add to this appeal a word of caution and encouragement to any who may feel drawn to offer themselves for this work.

"Of caution--urging such to count the cost; prayerfully to wait on GOD; and to ask themselves whether they will really trust Him for everything, wherever He may call them to go. Mere romantic feeling must soon die out in the toilsome labour and constant discomforts and trials of inland work, and will not be worth much when severe illness arises, and perhaps the money is all gone. Faith in the living GOD alone gives joy and rest in such circumstances.

"Of encouragement—for we ourselves have proved GOD'S faithfulness, and the blessedness of dependence on Him alone. He is supplying, and ever has supplied, all our need. And if not seldom we have fellowship in poverty with Him who for our sakes became poor, shall we not rejoice if the day prove that, like the great missionary apostle, we have been 'poor, yet making many rich'? The LORD makes us very happy in His service, and those of us who have children desire nothing better for them, should He tarry, than that they may be called to similar work and to similar joys.

"May He, dear Christian friends at home, ever be to you 'a living, bright Reality,' and enable you to fulfil His calling, and live as witnesses to Him in the power of the HOLY GHOST."

The circulation of this appeal in all the stations in China took a long time. Many of the nearer posts were two or three weeks' journey from the coast, while the most distant were three, four, and five months away.

Great was the rejoicing in many a distant station when the little paper made its message known. The courage of weary toilers was revived, and many a lonely one was cheered in anticipation of help so sorely needed. There was not, however, perfect unanimity of feeling in every station. Some doubted the wisdom of asking so many new workers ; some thought it better, while praying for reinforcements, to fix no special number. But most felt that prayer could not be too definite, so that when the answer came it might be clearly recognised. Seventy-seven signatures were affixed to the appeal, which then went home for publication in Christian journals.

Early in the following year, 1882, the first party of the Seventy arrived, and before twelve months from the time of the Conference had passed nine of the prayed-for workers were in China. But only nine out of seventy.

It was a year of a good deal of testing and trial of faith to those on the field. Funds continued low, and during the last three months matters came to a climax.

"In October we were looking with special expectancy," wrote Mr. Hudson Taylor, "for liberal supplies, as money

for the expenses of long autumn journeys seemed needed. And when, one day, we received home letters at table, and opening one of them found, instead of the expected sum of eight hundred pounds or more, only £96 9*s.* 5*d.*—our feelings may be better imagined than described.

"The envelope was closed again, and soon I sought my room, and, locking the door, knelt down and spread the letter before the LORD, asking Him what was to be done with less than a hundred pounds—a sum impossible to distribute over seventy stations in which were ninety missionaries, not to speak of a hundred native helpers, and as many more native children to board and clothe in our schools. Having first rolled the burden on the LORD, I then mentioned the need to others of our own Mission, and we unitedly looked to Him to come to our aid, but no hint of our circumstances was given to outsiders.

"Soon the answer to our prayer began to come, in local gifts from kind friends, who little knew the value of their donations, and in other ways, until ere long the needs of the month were all met, and met without our having been burdened for one hour with anxious care.

"We had similar experiences in November, and again in December; and on each occasion, after spreading the letter before the LORD, we left the burden with Him, and were 'helped.' 'Therefore our hearts greatly rejoice, and with our song will we praise Him.'"

A little later, just before Mr. Taylor's return to England in the spring of 1883, it appeared from various home letters that some warm friends of the Mission were feeling really troubled about the matter fearing that while the Seventy might be given, in answer to prayer, means would prove insufficient to send them out and support them in China. Mr.

Taylor was at Chefoo at the time; and at one of the usual morning prayer-meetings he and a few others united definitely to ask the LORD to put His seal upon the matter for the encouragement of those who were fearful.

"Not more than half a dozen were present," he writes "and the little prayer-meeting was held either during one of the last days of January or on the 1st of February. I regret that the date was not noted at the time; but I sailed from Chefoo on February 5th or 6th, and it must have been a few days before then.

"We knew that our Father loves to please His children —what father does not?—and we asked Him lovingly to please us, as well as encourage the timid ones, by leading some one of His wealthy stewards to make room for a large blessing for himself and his family, by giving liberally of his substance for this special object.

"No account of this prayer meeting was written home, and had it been written the letter could not have reached England before the latter part of March. It was telegraphed straight up to heaven, and GOD at once telegraphed down the desire into the heart of one of His servants, who, on February 2nd, sent in anonymously £3,000 for this very purpose.

"By the time I was halfway home to England the tidings, halfway out, reached me at Aden, and it may be imagined with what joy I received them.

"Nor was this all. When I reached Marseilles, and went on to spend a few days with our much-valued friend, W. T. Berger, Esq., at Cannes, the April number of *China's Millions* was put into my hands. There I saw in the list of donations, this £3,000, acknowledged under date of February 2nd, as follows:—

Psalm ii. 8.

"Ask of Me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

Father £1,000	Mary £200	Bertie £200	Henry £200
Mother 1,000	Rosie 200	Amy 200	

£3,000

"It was most striking to notice how literally GOD had fulfilled our prayer, and led His servant *to make room for a large blessing for himself and his family.* Never before had a donation been received and acknowledged in this way, and never since—save once, eighteen months later, when another gift for the same fund is entered thus :—

Psalm ii. 8.

Father £200	Mary £100	Bertie £100	Henry £100
Mother 200	Rosie 100	Amy 100	Baby 100

£1,000

"A beautiful instance, this, of a loving father who seeks that his children shall have treasure in heaven."

And what of the prayer for the Seventy and its answer?

"We had prayed in faith," continued Mr. Taylor, "and made our boast in GOD. When the time elapsed we were put to shame? Nay, verily! Not only was the number we had been led to ask for duly given, but our prayer was answered according to GOD's own scale, 'Exceeding abundantly, above all that ye ask or think.' Seventy-six actually reached China in the years 1882, '83, '84; while a further number accepted would have followed, had not the French war rendered it advisable to defer the time of their sailing.

"Another point is interesting in connection with this

prayer. Our petition was that GOD would send us 'willing, skilful' men and 'willing, skilful' women for every department of service. There are many workers to be found who are willing, but far from skilful; and some who have much skill, but are not always very willing. We asked for 'willing, skilful' men and women for every branch of the Mission. That GOD has indeed granted this request, in large measure, in sending us the Seventy is well known to those familiar with the new workers. Many have proved themselves to be not God-sent merely, but God-*sends* in the truest sense; and great have been the joy and thankfulness of those who in many provinces have welcomed their seasonable aid."

Among so large and valued a band of helpers many names might be mentioned in proof of this. Suffice it to say that the Seventy included no fewer than three medical men, who are still spared to the Mission in China; and that the last party of all was Miss Murray's well-known group, since so much used of GOD at Yang-chau and on the Kwang-sin River.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DR. SCHOFIELD AND MEDICAL MISSIONS.

AMONGST those in China who longed and prayed for the coming of the Seventy, none, perhaps, did so more earnestly than Dr. Harold Schofield, of T'ai-yuen Fu, SHAN-SI. He was a man of rich and rare endowments, and had given himself to the work of the LORD in China with enthusiasm and devotion. It was a deep and constant sorrow to him that Christians at home so little realised the appalling needs of heathendom. About the prayer for the reinforcements he wrote to Mr. Taylor:—

"We learn that you have begun to ask the LORD for forty-two brethren and twenty-eight sisters to labour in China; and that you seek others to join you in laying this petition before GOD. My dear wife and I wish to put down our names. We have begun daily to pray for this, and *I believe the LORD will grant it.*"

The life of Harold Schofield is one of singular interest. Born in 1851, he was the third son of Robert Schofield, Esq., of Heybrook, Rochdale. At nine years old he gave his heart to GOD, and from that time forward sought first the things of the Kingdom. As a

school-boy and student at Owen's College, Manchester, he was always to the front in athletic sports, manly exercises, and scholastic attainments, obtaining the Victoria Scholarship in classics, the London University B.A. and B.Sc. degrees, and being subsequently elected an Associate of Owen's College.

"His next achievement was an exhibition to Lincoln College, Oxford. Entering there in October 1870, he graduated with first-class honours in Natural Science, and afterwards filled an appointment in the Museum of Comparative Anatomy under the late Professor Rolleston. Gaining the open scholarship in Natural Science at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, he began there, in 1873, the study of medicine, prosecuting his work with so much vigour as successively to win the Foster Scholarship in Anatomy, the Junior and Senior Scholarships, in their respective years, the Brackenbury Medical Scholarship, and the Laurence Scholarship and gold medal.

"About this time he gained the Radcliffe Travelling Fellowship in Natural Science at Oxford, and, having graduated, he proceeded to Vienna and Prague to follow his studies there. War between Turkey and Servia breaking out about this time, he offered his services as surgeon to the Red Cross Society, and was put in charge of the hospital at Belgrade during the campaign. Next year he served in a like capacity in the Turkish army during the Russo-Turkish war. On the expiration of his Radcliffe Fellowship he returned to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and filled

successively the appointments of house-surgeon and house-physician."*

A brilliant career was thus opening before him. Eminence in his profession, honour, wealth, and a life of distinguished usefulness were all within his reach. Respected and loved by a large circle of friends, he however valued far more highly than popularity or success the opportunities for usefulness in the LORD'S service, open to him amongst young men in his own profession, amongst his patients, and in evangelistic work.

Above all things Harold Schofield was a Christian. "What the LORD blesses everywhere," he would say, "is not great knowledge, but great devotedness of heart to Himself."

"Make me real," was his earnest prayer. "Make me like one who waits for his LORD. Give me to meditate continually upon Thy Word. . . . Enable me to aim at nothing less than walking in this world as CHRIST Himself walked. Save me from the subtle snare of lowering my standard bit by bit to meet my miserable attainments. Oh, take my all, fill my heart, and make me wholly Thine."

He was a constant student of the Bible; and his attitude towards the claims of GOD upon his life was uncompromising. "My health, my time, my all," he wrote, "is a sacred trust from GOD, to be used and improved for Him."

* Obituary Notice from the *Lancet*.

No wonder that this man heard the call of GOD to preach the Gospel amongst China's millions! Reading the life of Dr. Elmslie, of the C. M. S., in Kashmir, decided him to become a medical missionary. After some years of thought and prayer, and just as he was concluding his duties as house-physician at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, he announced his resolve.

Great surprise and opposition were awakened. What, *such* a man throw himself away upon *such* work? "He had spent many years in getting the best medical training possible. Large sums of money had been lavished upon his education. The value of his scholarships alone amounted to nearly fifteen hundred pounds! He was known to be one of the ablest young men in his profession. To many it seemed a waste of power for such a man to go out to China." All possible urgency was used to dissuade him, and the needs of the heathen at home pleaded as quite as great as those of the heathen abroad. But the young doctor was sure of the call of GOD, and no earthly ambition or advantage had any weight with him compared to the joy of fellowship with his LORD in a life of self-sacrificing service for the salvation of the world.

"*Not those that need you, but those that need you most.*" He had heard of the darkness of China, and felt the supreme claim was there, with the supreme need.

He was young, strong, well equipped, and free to go. Surely if *he* held back bloodguiltiness would

be upon him. Was it a loss to go? He felt it would be loss to stay. To all eternity he would be able to serve his LORD; but would he ever have, in another life, the opportunity of sacrificing anything, of suffering for His sake? That he had what the world called much to give, was surely an added reason for joy and thankfulness in laying all at JESUS' feet. "A million a month in China are dying without GOD." This was his call. He heard it, and obeyed.

The simplicity and, as he felt, spiritual principles of the C. I. M. attracted him. He acquainted himself thoroughly with its methods, sphere, and needs, and heartily threw in his lot with its workers. At the age of twenty-nine, he sailed for China, having been united in marriage to a lady thoroughly one with him in spirit.

Summer was already full, when, upon the last day of June 1880, Dr. and Mrs. Schofield landed in Shanghai. The first few months they spent at Chefoo studying the language, and looking forward with glad hearts to life-labour in the far Interior.

The year in which they joined the Mission was, as we have seen, one of special crisis in its history. It was the year before the prayer for the Seventy, when openings abounded on all hands, but to blessing and encouragement were united great shortness of funds and serious lack of helpers in every province. Ladies had just begun to go far inland, and the tidings of their brave journeys called forth much thankful sympathy.

Keenly did Dr. Schofield appreciate and rejoice in the wide sphere and wonderful opportunities of the Mission. He longed himself to be where the need was greatest, and had a warm heart for the work of women in these high places of the field.

Four months after his arrival in China he started westward from Chefoo for the great inland province of SHAN-SI. T'ai-yuen, its capital, was his destination—an important city, standing on the northern border of a fertile plain three thousand feet above sea-level. Studded with populous centres, this wide *plateau* stretches away from the capital, covering an area of two thousand square miles. To the south of it lies the city of Ping-yang Fu, influential throughout the southern part of the province, bordering on HO-NAN. In 1880 these two cities, T'ai-yuen and P'ing-yang, were the only places in SHAN-SI where missionaries were stationed. Round them lay the vast province, as large as the State of Iowa, or New York and Massachusetts together, with more than the entire population of all three, shrouded in heathen darkness.

Into such a sphere Dr. and Mrs. Schofield found themselves introduced, when, in the end of November 1880, they reached T'ai-yuen. Seven missionaries of the C. I. M. were working there and at P'ing-yang, and one or two connected with other Societies ; but, all told, they were not one man to a million of the surrounding heathen.

What a sphere! What needs! Did the young missionary doctor regret *then* that he had given up

home and fame, wealth and ease, to live CHRIST in the midst of such darkness? Did he feel that the claims of Christian England outweighed these? Here he was, the first and only medical missionary, in a province larger than the whole of England, where seven men were seeking to bring the Gospel to nine millions of people! Was such a position unworthy compared with the distinctions he had left behind? True, he was poor in this world's wealth, lived only in a simple Chinese dwelling, and dressed in the costume of the people, with cotton gown and braided *queue*; true, the language had to be mastered, and the work that lay before him was well-nigh overwhelming. But, as GOD sees things, was Harold Schofield's life thrown away and wasted in such a sphere? Or were those ten talents invested to the very best account? Ponder the question, young men, and may GOD give us all to see things in their true proportions, in the light of Eternity!

"To me it seems unutterably sad," he wrote, "that now, more than eighteen hundred years after the ascending Saviour gave His great commission to 'go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,' there should be hundreds of millions in this vast empire who have never so much as heard of CHRIST.

"When I was preparing to come to China . . . some of my best friends tried to dissuade me on the plea that there was so much to be done at home. How I wish that they, and all who use this argument, could but live here for awhile, and see and feel the need for themselves! They would then be disposed to ask, not whether I had a special

call to go to China, but whether they have any special call to remain in England."

1881 and '82 were busy years for the T'ai-yuen workers. As soon as it became known that a foreign doctor had arrived patients began to crowd to the hospital. It was hard for him, at first, to study, heal, and preach all at the same time. But he quickly became familiar with the language, having remarkable linguistic talent, and an intense longing to be able to tell of JESUS. Although enthusiastic in his profession, he always kept the more directly spiritual part of his work in view, not only conducting the daily morning service for the patients himself, but in the Sunday meetings, in the street-chapel, tea-shops, or crowded thoroughfares, rejoicing to preach the glad tidings of a Saviour's love.

"Did I tell you," wrote one of his fellow-missionaries in August 1882, "what a capital street-preacher Dr. Schofield is becoming? I often envy him the power. He reiterates a truth until some one takes it up and translates it into the local dialect, which is very different from the Mandarin."

"He healed and preached with glad hopefulness," wrote another. "We are very happy," he said himself. "And I feel more thankful every day for the privilege of being permitted to labour for the LORD where the need is so great."

During his first year (1881) he treated about fifty in-patients and fifteen hundred out-patients in the

A VILLAGE IN SHAN-SI.

dispensary. In 1882 the numbers doubled. During all this year prayer was going up for the Seventy, in which Dr. and Mrs. Schofield daily joined. Keenly did he feel the need of reinforcements. Many of his patients came from long distances, and returning, healed and grateful, begged that some one might be sent to their country villages to teach them more about JESUS. But none were free to go.

"There are three or four towns," wrote the doctor, "within a day or two's journey, in each of which we have old patients, three of them double cataract cases who can now see well. . . . These openings I long to follow up.

"Again, the village work is developing most hopefully. There are far more doors than we can possibly enter. . . .

"We have had four baptisms this week, February 12th, 1883, and our hearts are full of joy and gratitude. . . . It is, indeed, an unspeakable happiness to see these poor souls turning from their gross darkness to GOD'S marvellous light."

A man of intense and ready sympathy, Dr. Schofield continually rejoiced to see suffering relieved, blindness removed, and life saved through his patient ministrations.

"One poor man," he wrote, "fifty-five years of age, with double cataract, practically blind, groped and begged his way to the hospital, a distance of fifty miles, taking about a fortnight to accomplish the journey. He recovered good vision in both eyes, and was greatly delighted at being able to walk home in two or three days.

"Another patient, a woman aged forty-seven, was dismissed from her situation, being blind in the same way.

In her despair she twice attempted suicide, by jumping into a river, and down a well, but was saved on both occasions. A friend brought her to us. Both eyes were successfully operated on. She is now able to sew and do housework, and will probably remain with us to attend the female in-patients."

Such cases might be multiplied did space permit.

Opium was found to be a fruitful cause of suffering, sin, and death. Out of thirty cases of suicide during '82, twenty-seven had taken opium. Most of them recovered under prompt treatment; but in one instance artificial respiration, steadily persevered in for three or four hours, alone proved availing.

Even among little babies poisoning by this means was not uncommon. Left to crawl about upon the large k'ang, or heated brick bed, used in northern China, they would often find the small jar containing thick, black, treacle-like opium, used by the father or mother for smoking purposes. Naturally the little fingers went in, and then up to the baby-mouth, carrying quite enough of the deadly poison to put an end, within a few brief hours, to the little life! Two infants of ten months old were brought to the hospital poisoned in this way, and only the most careful treatment saved them.

Opium smokers were estimated to be fifty per cent. of the male population of the city.

"Another year's experience," wrote Dr. Schofield, "deepens my conviction that opium smoking is a terrible curse, physically, socially, and morally."

Thus in busy, useful service the months sped quickly by. Larger premises had to be obtained as the number of patients increased, and bright prospects of extending influence and blessing cheered the workers' hearts. A son and a little daughter were given to perfect the happiness of that missionary home. Honoured and beloved by Chinese and foreigners alike, rejoicing in the sphere and service for which he was so singularly fitted, and happy in the consciousness that he was in the place where GOD would have him be, Harold Schofield's life-work seemed to have come to him in China.

It was now the summer of 1883. Every month brought increasing opportunities of usefulness, and seemed to deepen his earnest consecration. During the busy, long, hot days he was more than usual in prayer. Often as Mrs. Schofield passed through the courtyard she would hear him pleading with GOD for more labourers and for blessing on the work. One special burden on his heart was the need for men of superior gifts, training, and social culture. He felt that China called for the best that the Church of CHRIST could give; that, while offering a sphere to all, she required in a special way the highest talents, education, and force of character, as well as lofty spiritual endowments. Often during those summer months he earnestly sought from GOD an outpouring of His SPIRIT upon young men in the home Colleges and Universities, that the choicest and

best from Oxford, Cambridge, and other such centres might be sent to the crowded cities and towns of China. He prayed that they might come, and come to SHAN-SI ; and he believed that his prayers would be answered.

Answered they assuredly were, within two years from that time. Did he see it, know it, far in the Homeland, when he had entered into the rest that remains for the people of GOD?

One hot July day, amongst other patients, a man was brought suffering from virulent diphtheria. Dr. Schofield, always full of eagerness to help, did what was in his power, but told the poor fellow that he could not remain in the hospital, as the disease was so terribly infectious. The man retired, but not to go away. He succeeded, somehow, in duping the gatekeeper, and, unknown to any of the household, passed the night in a room on the front courtyard.

Next morning the doctor heard that some one had died on the premises. Startled, he went at once to see who it was, thinking of a patient upon whom he had lately operated. The close little room was entered, and there upon the k'ang he saw, to his surprise, the body of the poor man he had treated for diphtheria! To that poison-charged atmosphere Dr. Schofield was exposed until the remains were taken away for burial.

Four days later the doctor felt far from well. At the end of the week he was in high fever, and

obliged to give up his work. Trusting, at first, that it was only a malarial attack, all hoped for the best. But soon symptoms of typhus set in, and it was clearly to be a fight for life. He was young and strong, and had all that skill and love could do to help him. Prayer was unremitting on his behalf. Surely it could not be that his work was done!

For a week the terrible fever ran its course, hope alternating with fear. One desire seemed to fill the mind of the sufferer—that the will of GOD might be accomplished. His constant prayer was for patience. Even in pain his soul was filled with joy and peace, and his face seemed to grow more and more radiant with the passing hours.

Towards evening, on the last, long day of July, the fever rose rapidly, and nothing could abate it . . . 105°, 106° . . . At midnight it was over 107°. And at one o'clock in the morning it stood above 108.° About an hour later he peacefully passed away.

On the afternoon of that summer day, August 1st, 1883—darkened for them with the shadow of an unutterable sorrow—his fellow-workers committed the precious dust to rest, in the eastern hills overlooking the city; and coming back through the familiar streets, that seemed so deserted now they should see his face no more, heard the Chinese remark in softened tones,—

"Is the good doctor gone? Alas! Alas!"

Yes, he was gone from the scenes of his bright

earthly service. After only three years in China he was called into the presence of the King. Did he regret *then* that he had left all to follow Him? Or did those closing days shine out as the brightest and best he had known?

"Loving farewell," he said, "to Mr. Taylor and the Council. . . . Tell them that these three years in China have been by far the happiest of my life."

And to all who loved him he sent this message :—

"A little while—and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

> "A little while for winning souls to JESUS;
> Ere we behold His beauty face to face;
> A little while for healing soul diseases
> By telling others of a Saviour's grace."

* * * * * *

Upon whom shall his mantle fall?

"Where are the others who stand in full view of earthly honours and emoluments, and rejoice to make them a sacrifice to CHRIST for the extension of His Kingdom?"

Christian doctors, there is no class of men to whom GOD has entrusted more responsibility in connection with the heathen than He has to you; for none have grander opportunities. To your hands is committed a double gift, and with it the command —"Heal the sick and preach the Gospel."

The Divine idea embodied in the life of CHRIST seeks, through you, present expression; for you especially are called to follow in His steps, who

"went about doing good," revealing the heart of GOD, in its compassion, to suffering, sinning man.

It is harder to gain access to the people than to learn their language. And hardest of all is to win their hearts, making them feel, through our lives, that GOD loves them. In your hands lies a wonderful power to accomplish this. The medical missionary is everywhere understood and appreciated. He, better than any other, can disarm prejudice, gain confidence, establish friendly relations, and by his sympathy and kindness win a way for the Gospel. He can bring to the suffering and distressed not only hope for hereafter, but comfort and help in the pressing daily now. "It is the love of GOD in him, alike in message and in deed, which is the mighty force whereby the HOLY SPIRIT wins the day."

CHRIST claims our every talent. Will you not rejoice to lay yours at His feet?

The need is great—overwhelming! Remember:—

1. "There are over one thousand million heathen and Mohammedans in the world to-day.

2. "They are perishing, no less physically for lack of medical aid, than spiritually from ignorance of the Gospel.

3. "There is only *one* medical missionary, on an average, to almost as many as the entire population of London.

4. "They are dying at about the rate of forty millions every year, the greater number having never heard of CHRIST.

"And these poor sufferers have bodies like our own. They have nerves, and feel as we do. We know it. But

are we not in danger of forgetting sometimes, and unconsciously assuming that they are made of the same stuff as the very idols that they worship? We know from experience what sickness is, with all the aids of modern medical science. What must it be without any of these?"*

Pre-eminent in need, China appeals most strongly to the medical missionary. Her vast and crowded population, her utter ignorance of surgical science, her fearful sufferings from smallpox, cholera, ophthalmia, fever, leprosy, and skin diseases, lay upon every physician and surgeon who belongs to CHRIST a tremendous claim. In the United Kingdom there is one doctor to every fifteen hundred of the population. In China medical missionaries average one among two millions.†

Two millions—every one of whom at some period of his or her life is in extreme need of just the help that you can give. Wax is hard till touched by heat, but then it will take any impress you wish. Softened by suffering, melted by kindness, how easily those hearts might be turned to the Saviour in their hour of distress.

Compassion calls.

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* See "Report of the Missionary Conference," London. vol. ii., p. 108.

† There are 120 medical missionaries of all Societies in China. A large number are American. Of the remainder 63 hold British qualifications, 61 being men, and 2 women. The C.I.M. has 14 fully qualified doctors, 7 hospitals, and 16 dispensaries. More medical men are urgently needed in this field.

"Think of their sad condition—denied proper food, tortured with needle and cautery, uncared for, and lying often on the bare ground. Think of the neglected eye diseases, ending in blindness; of the neglected bone diseases, enfeebling and crippling; of the malignant tumours, disfiguring, torturing, killing!

"Brothers, your skill, if consecrated to their service, would give sight to many who otherwise must remain blind; would restore strength and usefulness to diseased limbs; and give back bread-winners to their families. It would also preserve other missionaries in health. Ay, and more than this, it would open doors still closed to the Gospel. You would win immortal souls for your hire, a crown of rejoicing, and an exceeding weight of glory in that day when He makes up His jewels." *

"Sir," said a swarthy African, his face lined with care, a group of sick and suffering round him, that he had brought to the missionary, "we dwell in a town distant more than one march of the sun from you. We often heard of the white man and his wondrous medicines, but never till now had the courage to come. Of late sickness has been rife, and we became bold in our despair. I went through all my neighbours' yards and sought out all the sick, laid them in a long canoe, and paddled them slowly here. Sir, what could we do? Many were sick, and some were dying, and there was none to heal. So to you we have brought them. To you we come Help us, we pray you help us!"

* Appeal from four medical missionaries of the Church Missionary Society.

Will you not thank GOD that you may be a medical missionary? Surely here is a nobler sphere for all your powers than can be found at home in the ranks of an over-stocked profession? "True, you may hope for success. You will certainly earn a competency, and perhaps attain wealth. You may justly win a local if not an European reputation. But your success will only make the struggle harder for other practitioners. And your *reputation*? Have we not read, 'He made Himself of no reputation'?"

If it were only the call of a noble philanthropy, that in itself would be overwhelmingly strong; but there is a far higher claim to those who would be "labourers together with GOD."

"We believe," writes an American missionary, "that if the spiritual fruits of our Medical Missions in China could be tabulated, the fact would be revealed that in that great Empire no method of missionary work has been more signally blessed in spreading a knowledge of the Gospel. . . . The seed sown in the hearts of patients has in many cases brought forth fruit, in some thirty, in some sixty, and in some a hundredfold. In not a few instances native churches have sprung up in towns and villages far distant from the headquarters of the medical work. . . . The patients having received the 'double cure,' returned to their homes, and told among their friends what the LORD had done for their souls. Thus Medical Missions have not only broken down prejudice, and opened 'wide doors and effectual' among the exclusive Chinese, but have also been in a very marked degree the nurseries of the native church."

"The congregation gathered in the hospital-chapel," says

Dr. Maxwell, "is unique in its comprehensiveness. It is not merely one or two hundred souls, it is one or two hundred souls representing, probably, fifty different towns and villages; and it means of necessity a diffusion of a measure of Gospel truth in all these different places. As many as twelve to fourteen hundred towns and villages have been represented in a single year amongst the in-patients of a single hospital. Does not this speak of rare and glorious possibilities? Can we overestimate the value of such opportunities as these?"

Take one instance.

"In China the late Dr. Mackenzie operated upon the eyes of two girls in one family, and gave them sight. And then the mother was operated on successfully. She had never seen her children, and her delight and gratitude knew no bounds! As a result, all three were converted, the father also, and many others. And a successful church of a hundred or more is now to be found in their village."

Thus works the "double cure." And even where perfect healing for the body is impossible healing for the soul may be found.

"It is extraordinary," writes Mr. Wellesley Bailey, "the number of *lepers* who receive the Gospel of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. As a class, I do not know any in India so accessible. . . . And my experience is that we have had among them some of the brightest converts we have made in any class of the community. I have met with lepers who were as true Christians as any I have known. Let me give the testimony of one. It went so deeply to my heart that I can never forget it. . . .

"I stood beside a poor mutilated form—a man literally falling to pieces before my eyes. And when I commiserated him upon his terrible sufferings, that poor man said to me in a hoarse, broken whisper:—

"'No, sir, no! GOD is very good to me. For the last nineteen years, since I have trusted CHRIST, I have known neither pain of body nor pain of mind.'

"So wonderfully had CHRIST lifted him above all his sufferings that he was able to say that! I was so astonished that I could hardly believe it, and questioned whether I had heard him aright. And again the old man whispered, 'Since I trusted CHRIST, nineteen years ago, I have known neither pain of body nor pain of mind.'"

Who shall question the value of medical missionary work in face of such facts as these? No, "CHRIST commands it; compassion requires it; wisdom approves it, experience proclaims its value."

But in conclusion, one question more:—

"*To know that millions are perishing, body and soul; to possess the means which might save both; to withhold the same and let them perish, is—What?*"

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE CAMBRIDGE BAND AND SHAN-SI.

EIGHTEEN months have passed since the death of Harold Schofield from typhus fever, far away in inland China. Instead of the early dawning of a long, hot summer day over a Chinese city, we stand in the gloaming of a chill, wet January night in London's busy Strand. Down pours the persistent rain. But crowds of people throng the entrances to Exeter Hall, regardless of weather, and the great area of the building is filled to its utmost limit, long before the hour fixed for assembly.

Evidently some deep interest and strong enthusiasm move this vast throng. What is it that has brought them thus together? Only a missionary meeting? Surely one of unusual interest!

Enter with the multitudes. It is a sight that even Exeter Hall, with its long roll of enthusiastic gatherings, rarely equals. Hundreds of young men throng the vast building, mingling with a representative gathering of all ranks and ages, of all sections of the Church and grades in social life. Upon the platform, amongst others waiting for the speakers, is a deputation of forty undergraduates from Cambridge.

It is not difficult to discover the centre of interest to-night. Across the hall large maps of China are suspended, showing the stations of the Inland Mission.

A missionary farewell has summoned this great multitude. Seven young men are upon the eve of starting for work in inland China. Who are they? And how comes it that their going has awakened such enthusiastic interest?

The answer is on every lip—"The Cambridge Band sail to-morrow. To-night is their farewell. Five from the University, and two young officers from crack regiments, have together given themselves to the work of GOD in China; not only relinquishing brilliant prospects and social distinction, to become poor missionaries, but actually joining the China Inland Mission, which means so much! They are going to put on Chinese dress and braided tail; going to bury themselves, nobody knows where, in the heart of that strange land, to live in the people's houses and eat their food, and rough it in long, trying journeys and all sorts of other ways. Strange infatuation! and yet they seem intensely happy about it—count it quite an honour and privilege, and never can be got to say a word as to any sacrifice involved."

Silence steals over the vast assembly. The Chairman enters, and with him the outgoing band. Stanley P. Smith, and his friend, C. T. Studd, from Trinity College, Cambridge, both distinguished in the athletic world; the Rev. W. W. Cassels, of St. John's; Montagu Beauchamp and Arthur Polhill-

THE CAMBRIDGE BAND.*

Turner, from Trinity, and Ridley Hall; D. E. Hoste, late of the Royal Artillery; and Cecil Polhill-Turner, of the 2nd Dragoon Guards. Young all of them—in the full strength and vigour of their manhood—

* 1. C. T. Studd.
2. D. E. Hoste.
3. W. W. Cassels.
4. S. P. Smith.
5. C. Polhill-Turner.
6. A. Polhill-Turner.
7. M. Beauchamp.

embodying all that is noblest and best in the estimation of their fellows, all that most readily stirs admiration, and wins regard. No wonder the heart of Christian England was moved. Consecration to the work of missions is not, thank GOD, unusual in our day.

"But when before," wrote one who was present, "were the stroke of a University eight, the captain of a University eleven, an officer of the Royal Artillery, and an officer of the Dragoon Guards seen standing side by side, renouncing the careers in which they had already gained no small distinction, putting aside the splendid prizes of earthly ambition which they might reasonably expect to win, taking leave of the social circles in which they shone with no mean brilliance, and plunging into that warfare whose splendours are seen by faith alone, and whose rewards seem so shadowy to the unopened vision of ordinary men?

"It was a sight to stir the heart, and a striking testimony to the power of the uplifted CHRIST to draw to Himself not the weak, the emotional, and the illiterate only, but all that is noblest in strength and finest in culture."

One glance at the faces of these men is enough to assure the most casual observer that they are intensely in earnest, and that they are filled with a peace and joy the world cannot give. As they address the assembled multitudes, not one heart but is convinced of the loftiness of their aims, the depth and devotion of their love to CHRIST, and the grandeur of the cause to which their lives are given.

"We began to understand," wrote one, "how much more noble a sphere of service was offered by CHRIST to

young men with great possessions and good abilities, than any the cricket field, or the river, the army, or the bar could afford."

Earnest, loving words of eloquence and power carry home the message so deeply upon their hearts. It is CHRIST alone they preach. The joy of being His; the joy of living to serve and love Him; of leading others into His liberty and light; of following Him even into lives of self-emptying, loneliness, and toil—for the life of the world; and the necessity for absolute self-surrender and obedience if one would know the rest in Him and peace that passes understanding. And then, the depth of our indebtedness to those who know not GOD.

"We are all under obligation to spread the knowledge of a good thing," said Mr. Stanley Smith. "It is simply this fact, coupled with our having clearly heard the Master's call, that is sending us out to China.

"We do not go to that far field to tell of doctrines merely, but of a living, present, reigning CHRIST. . . .

"We want to come to the Chinaman, buried in theories and prejudices, and bound by chains of lust, and say to him, 'Brother, I bring you an almighty Saviour!' And it is our earnest hope and desire that the outcome of this meeting will be that scores and scores of those whom we now see before us will ere long go forth not to China only, but to every part of the world, to spread the glorious Gospel.

"For years in England we have been debtors. . . . And the knowledge of this precious JESUS, who to most of us is everything in the world, is absolutely wanting to thousands and millions of our fellow-men and women to-day.

"What are we going to do? What is the use of great meetings like this if the outcome is not to be something worthy of the name of JESUS? He wants us to take up our Cross and follow Him,—to leave fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, friends, property, and everything we hold dear, to carry the Gospel to the perishing. . . .

"Oh, to think that Gordon at Khartoum has but to speak a word, and millions of money go from England . . . and in Egypt our noblest and bravest shed their blood. . . . A greater than Gordon appeals to the Church. From the Cross of Calvary the voice of JESUS still cries . . . 'I thirst'

"Ah, that Divine thirst! It has not yet been quenched. It has hardly begun to be quenched.

"He thirsts for the Chinese, the African, the Hindu, the South American. Are there none here who would fain quench His thirst? Would you pass by that CHRIST? Behold His agony! You could not do so had you seen Him in the flesh. But now He thirsts with a deeper than bodily thirst. With His great soul He thirsts for the millions of this earth.

"David once thirsted for the waters of Bethlehem . . . and three of his followers broke through the ranks of the enemy, and, at the risk of their lives, brought him that water. . . .

"Shall not this Mightier than David have His thirst quenched to-night? Shall not the Divine LORD have His thirst quenched? Shall not the Man of Sorrows have His great heart rejoiced by men and women offering themselves for the work of spreading the glorious Gospel? CHRIST yearns over this earth. *What are we going to do?* . . .

"Does some one ask, 'What is it that is sending you out?' We cannot tell you to-night of visions or dreams; but we can point . . . to the great needs of the heathen abroad that prevent us from staying in England.

"And now a last word. How can one leave such an audience as this? It seems to me as if CHRIST has come right into our midst, and has looked into each face amongst us—men and women, old and young. To each He comes with tender love . . . and, pointing to the wounds in His pierced side, He asks, '*Lovest thou Me?*' . . .

"'Yes, LORD, Thou knowest that I love Thee.'

"What is the test of love? . . . 'Keep My commandments.'

"What is the test of friendship? 'Slake My thirst.' 'Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.'

"And what, Master, do you command? 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.'"

The results of that evening's meeting in blessing to the world, eternity alone will reveal.

* * * * * *

But why recall a scene so familiar to most of us? To link it with another, that may be more deeply connected with it than we think. Only eighteen months before, in the summer of 1883, a solitary figure knelt in the little study on the inner courtyard of a Chinese dwelling in distant SHAN-SI. Harold Schofield's prayers that GOD would send out to China —send to that very spot—men of culture, education, and distinguished gifts, intellectual as well as spiritual, were silent now. His work seemed to have ended with an early death and lonely grave upon the eastern hills above the city. But was it done? Had those prayers no connection with the sailing of this group?

"About the end of 1883," said Stanley Smith—first of the Cambridge Band to give himself to GOD for

missionary work—"*About the end of 1883 I wrote to Mr. Taylor telling him I wanted to come out to China.*"

Not long, that, between the prayer and answer! Had Dr. Schofield but known it, he might have echoed the prophet's words, "Whiles I was speaking in prayer." . . . For at the beginning of his prayer the commandment went forth, and at the very time he was pleading with GOD, this young heart was being prepared for the call and consecration that were to bring the answer. Stanley Smith volunteered before the year closed. And two years later he and four of his companions from Cambridge were working on the T'ai-yuen plain, in the very towns and cities that had so heavily burdened Dr. Schofield's heart.

Nor was this all. Part of the missionary's plea had been that GOD would pour out a great blessing upon the Universities at home; that large numbers of college men might be converted, and consecrate their lives to foreign work.

One of the most remarkable features of the outgoing of the Cambridge Band in 1885 was the way in which their departure was used to bring this about. During that year the University of Edinburgh experienced a wonderful revival—the first wave of an incoming tide of unparalleled spiritual life and power. In February 1885 Dr. Moxey wrote:—

"The event that has precipitated the shower of blessing that has fallen in our midst is the recent visit of the two young Christian athletes from Cambridge who are now on their way to preach CHRIST to the Chinese.

"Students, like other young men, are apt to regard professedly religious men of their own age as wanting in manliness, unfit for the river or cricket-field, and only good for psalm-singing and pulling a long face. But the big, muscular hands and long arms of the ex-captain of the Cambridge eight, stretched out in entreaty, while he eloquently told the old story of Redeeming love, capsized their theory. And when Mr. C. T. Studd, whose name is to them familiar as a household word as perhaps the greatest gentleman bowler in England, supplemented his brother athlete's words by quiet but intense and burning utterances of personal testimony to the love and power of a personal Saviour, opposition and criticism were alike disarmed, and professors and students together were seen in tears, to be followed in the after meeting by the glorious sight of professors dealing with students and students with one another."

One of the promoters of this movement speaks of it as perhaps the most wonderful that ever took place in the history of university students.

"I have," he says, "to tell you how our great Edinburgh University and the allied medical schools, with between three and four thousand students, have been shaken to their very depths; how the blessing has spread to all the other universities of Scotland; and how already, as the students have scattered far and wide, the work is extending in its depth and reality throughout the whole country—I might almost say, throughout the world."

Oxford and Cambridge also were visited by the departing missionaries, with rich results in blessing. A deputation of men from Cambridge who had known and esteemed them during their college course

came to bid them farewell at the Exeter Hall meeting, as we have mentioned.

"We come," said the spokesman, "to wish these dear friends, whom we have known and respected for years past, every blessing. . . . Since I have been in this hall it has been said to me—

"'What a pity that such men should be going abroad! We want them here at home. Those who have distinguished themselves as they have could win young men to CHRIST, and do a work that others, less known, cannot accomplish.' And he went on to add, 'I hope it will be for the best.'

"Now, sirs, I do not hope it. I thank GOD that I *know* it is for the best. I know what their going out has done for me. I know what it has done for Cambridge. For years past Cambridge has not been behind other universities in missionary interest. Perhaps it has been before them. We have had missionary meetings, and missionaries have addressed us from time to time. But when men whom everybody had heard of, and many personally knew, came up and said, '*We are going*,' it seemed to bring us face to face, in a new way, with the needs of the heathen world. . . . We had meetings in room after room, night by night, at Cambridge, and at one over forty men stood up and gave themselves to missionary work.

"But not only has their going stirred up missionary interest; it has also taught us what it is to give ourselves wholly to CHRIST. . . . It has shown us that we must take up our cross and follow Him; that there is to be no compromise, however small; that we must be all for our Master, with nothing between our souls and Him.

"Now could these men hope to do a greater work by stopping at home? While they were here we loved and respected them, but they were never used of GOD as they are now."

The story of this remarkable movement is to be found in Mr. Broomhall's valuable book, *The Evangelisation of the World.* One quotation further may be given, as expressing a thought that naturally occurs in this connection. A correspondent writes to the *Record*, of the farewell meeting that took place at Cambridge when many hundreds of gownsmen were present:—

"As I sat last evening among the audience at the great 'China Inland' meeting in our Guildhall, a meeting of surpassing interest, and not least to an earnest Evangelical Churchman, I could not but ponder what the main reasons were for the might of a movement which has drawn to it man after man of a very noble type, and of just the qualities most influential in the young Cambridge world.

"My main reasons, after all, reduced themselves to one—the uncompromising spirituality and unworldliness of the programme of the Mission, responded to by hearts which have truly laid all at the LORD'S feet, and whose delight is the most open confession of His Name and its power upon themselves.

"I venture to pronounce it inconceivable, impossible, that such a meeting should have been held in connection with any mission enterprise of mixed aims, or in which such great truths as personal conversion, present peace and joy in believing, the present sanctifying power of the SPIRIT, the necessity among the heathen of faith in CHRIST for salvation, and the loss of the soul as the alternative, were ignored, or treated with hesitation. Nor could such a profound interest possibly be called out did the work not demand of the workers very real and manifest self-sacrifice, and acts of faith."

That a mission so little known—poor, unsupported

by any great denomination, and with methods so distasteful to the natural mind—should have attracted these men, was indeed no small part of the surprise evoked by the whole movement; but to those who remember Harold Schofield's life, consecration, prayers, and early death, and the promise, "If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," there may appear less wonder in the harvest reaped from buried seed.

On Thursday morning, February 5th, 1885, Mr. Stanley Smith and his companions started for China. Seldom has any departure excited wider interest, or called forth more prayer.

"Thoughtful minds," wrote Dr. Wilder, of Princeton, "will be waiting to see how the glow of their piety endures the tug and toil of learning the Chinese language, and their close contact, daily, with masses of ignorant and superstitious idolaters, no bracing influences around them from cultured Christian society."

How deadening such contact is, and how trying the sudden transition from crowded meetings and all the active service of life at home, to the isolation of an inland city, the difficulties of an unknown language, the restraints of Chinese custom and prejudice, and the burdens, big and little, that daily press upon the soul, face to face with heathenism, none but a missionary can fully know.

One of two very opposite effects is usually the result. Either the Divine life suffers and declines, or else, by prayer in the SPIRIT, and daily faithful study of the Word of GOD, the inward man is

strengthened to "run and not be weary," to "walk and not faint." But the missionary must carry his own atmosphere with him, only possible through the constant renewing of the HOLY GHOST."

Fully realising this, the journey out to China was made a time of special waiting upon GOD. In spite of much opposition and scorn, a bright testimony to CHRIST was maintained on board the ship, and souls were saved. The Cambridge men travelling second class, as missionaries, were a source of much wonder and amusement to their fellow-passengers, until they began to find out the power of those Christ-filled lives.

"Everything was ordered by our gracious GOD," wrote Mr. Stanley Smith, "to bring us to the shores of China in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of CHRIST; just seeing that all we have to do is to recognise that we are nothing, CHRIST is all, and trusting in Him to enter into the rest that remains for the people of GOD—the rest of faith. For surely GOD is strong enough to fight our battles. And surely GOD is rich enough to supply our needs. And surely GOD is wise enough to teach us and direct our paths."

The blessing which had so remarkably attended the meetings held in England and upon the voyage was repeated in Shanghai, Pekin, and elsewhere, upon the travellers' arrival. Meetings were held for English-speaking residents, and missionaries. Many young men and others were converted, and a remarkable outpouring of the SPIRIT OF GOD took place amongst the missionaries, especially at Pekin.*

* See *Evangelisation of the World*, pp. 36, 64.

Landing on March 18th, the young men were met by Mr. Hudson Taylor, who had preceded them by a fortnight to make all arrangements for their going inland at once. Chinese dress was put on, a long farewell said to foreign life and surroundings, and at Shanghai they parted; C. T. Studd and the Polhill-Turners going westward to Hankow, and thence by the Han to SHEN-SI; while Messrs. Stanley Smith, Hoste, and Cassels, and subsequently Mr. Beauchamp, went northward, *viâ* Pekin, to SHAN-SI.

In the lovely month of May, full of the hope and promise of spring, they reached T'ai-yuen, the capital of the province, and Dr. Harold Schofield's old home. Almost two years before, he had been called away from earthly service, and now they stood where his work had been laid down, the living answer to his many prayers.

Vast, needy, populous SHAN-SI, the sphere of their labours, was everywhere wonderfully open to the Gospel. The people, won by the kindness of the foreigners during the awful famine, were on all hands accessible, and favourably disposed. Dr. Schofield's medical skill had done much to deepen friendly feeling, and in many places Christian teachers had only to go, to be welcome. Larger than the whole of England, or the States of New York and Massachusetts put together, and with a population of nine millions, SHAN-SI had as yet only three mission stations. Over one hundred important walled cities, centres of government and influence, dotted her wide

plains and mountainous uplands; and over one hundred were still without a missionary. At T'ai-yuen and P'ing-yang Fu little churches were now gathered; and at T'ai-kuh, about forty miles south of the capital, representatives of the American Board had recently settled. But that was all. Still there were more than a hundred cities, with towns and villages innumerable; still there were thousands and thousands of homesteads, millions upon millions of souls, untouched by the Light of Life.

Such was SHAN-SI as the newly arrived Cambridge men found it, in May 1885.

That it was a fruitful and promising field there could be no doubt; for especially in the south of the province there were remarkable signs of blessing. The one station in that region, P'ing-yang Fu, had been opened by the Rev. David Hill, of the English Wesleyan Mission, during the time of the famine. Admirably situated in a populous district, this beautiful and important city became a centre from which the Gospel spread far and wide. Mr. Hill's Christlike spirit made itself deeply felt. His life was a blessing, and the people loved him.

In 1879 he was joined by Mr. J. J. Turner, of our Mission, who remained on after Mr. Hill was obliged to return to his important work in Hankow.

One of the most notable results of Mr. Hill's residence at P'ing-yang was the conversion of Pastor Hsi, at that time a proud Confucianist, and strongly opposed to foreigners.

A man of remarkable gifts and good family, Mr. Hsi was a scholar by training, and by heredity a doctor! He owned a small farm in a village near P'ing-yang, and was well known in the neighbourhood as a person of influence and standing. Hard times during the famine had made him poor, like everybody else, and thus it was he came under the influence of the foreigner. In 1880 Mr. David Hill offered a prize to the scholars of the city for the best essay upon Christian doctrines, supplying them with books. Mr. Hsi's essay gained the prize. He was introduced to Mr. Hill, and from the first greatly respected and loved him. The conversion that followed was gradual but decided. Mr. Hsi became an earnest spiritually-minded Christian, and continues a mighty power in the church to this day.

In 1882 Mr. Turner went home on furlough, and Mr. S. B. Drake, who had been helping him at P'ing-yang, took up the work, and began to organise the rapidly growing church with much wisdom. Recognising the remarkable gifts of Mr. Hsi, he appointed him an elder, and the Christians speedily came to look upon him as their head.

For about three years Mr. and Mrs. Drake worked on at P'ing-yang, most of the time singled-handed; and during that period the blessing of GOD rested upon their labours to a remarkable degree. In the spring of 1884, just a year before the arrival of the Cambridge Band, there were about fifty baptised members in the church, all of them tried believers

well known to the missionaries, who watched over them with constant care. The rule of the church was clear and decided—to receive no one by baptism until their earnestness and consistency had been fully proved by at least a year of Christian life.

Besides the members, there were large numbers of interested inquirers, who had put away their idols, and were meeting to worship GOD, in more than twenty villages round about the city. Services were held at eight village out-stations, and those who gathered regularly were fully three hundred persons.

Not a little persecution had attended the work, but the Christians only clung together the more firmly. Elder Hsi, full of life and fire, devoted his time voluntarily to travelling through the district, helping the believers in every possible way. Himself a saved opium smoker, he felt the deepest sympathy for others enthralled by the vice, and a large part of his efforts was on behalf of such. He commenced Opium Refuges in many places, and sold pills of his own making, as well as preaching the Gospel of a full salvation.

In the spring of 1885, Mr. and Mrs. Drake were obliged to leave for needed rest and change. And for a few months the Christians were left without missionary supervision.

To this interesting district four of the Cambridge Band were designated. Perhaps no more promising sphere could have been found in China. It was a great field, ripe for harvest, and very eagerly the

young missionaries anticipated the privilege of labouring there.

Leaving T'ai-yuen in the middle of June, they went southward across the great and populous plain, journeying through crowded towns and cities and countless villages among the cornfields, where the wheat was turning golden, and the maize was green and young, or amid acres of glowing opium poppy, brightening the landscape, but saddening the heart. The fine mountain ranges to east and west of them gradually approached, until at last the road ascended their lower slopes, the valleys narrowing so that only the river could find its way below. Fertile and well-wooded, some of the hillsides were lovely, and reminded the travellers of home. But no mission-station was passed on that long ten days' journey.

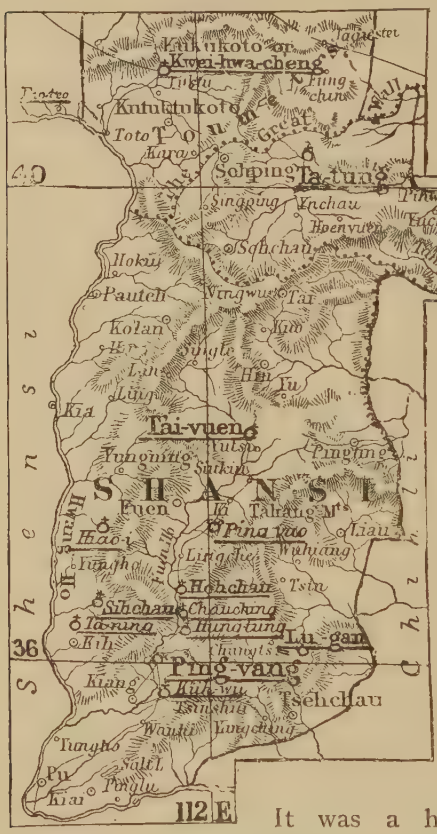
At last, however, signs of blessing indicated the neighbourhood of P'ing-yang.

"One day before reaching this city," wrote Mr. Cassels, "Stanley Smith was on in front . . . when a Chinaman came up and shook him warmly by the hand. Surprised at this,* Stanley at once thought the man must be a Christian, and said inquiringly,—

"'*Ye-su-tih men-tu?*'—'A disciple of JESUS?'

"The man signed that it was so; and then came and shook hands with me. He forthwith made us take some refreshment at a little place by the roadside . . . and invited us to his house, hard by, for our midday meal. As we went, he said he had known we were coming.

* For the Chinese mode of salutation is a deep bow, with clasped hands, raised to the forehead.



"'How so?' asked Mr. Key.

"'Because,' he answered, 'I have been praying that missionaries might soon be sent to us.' . . .

"Pointing up a valley, he continued, 'All the people living there are giving up their idols.'

"You can imagine how we were cheered by this, and how delightful it was to meet five or six other Christians at his house, and to join in prayer and praise, although we could not understand."

It was a happy party that occupied the roomy mission-premises at P'ing-yang that summer of 1885:—

"The four of us," wrote Mr. Cassels, "Beauchamp, Stanley Smith, Hoste, and I, occupy three sides of one little courtyard, each having a room to ourselves. On the fourth side is the room used as a chapel. In another court Mr. Baller and Mr. Key put up, and our dining-room and

kitchen are there. And in still another the evangelist lives. . . .

"We are very happy; enjoying our work, enjoying our walks on the city wall with views of the not distant mountains—wonderfully lighted at times by the setting sun, and enjoying, above all, our little gatherings for prayer and praise and study of GOD'S Word."

Here at last were the reinforcements so long needed. They were warmly welcomed by the Christians.

Rapid progress was made with the language; work came thick and threefold; and the friends could not long remain together. In eight months four new stations were opened—so that in May '86 Mr. Studd, who had come over from Han-chung to join them, was at K'uh-wu, an important city about forty miles south of P'ing-yang; Mr. Beauchamp at Sih-chau, three days' journey to the north-west; Mr. Cassels still farther on, at Ta-ning, among the mountains; Mr. Stanley Smith at the busy town of Hung-t'ung, twenty miles to the north-east; while Mr. Hoste was alone at P'ing-yang Fu.

July 1886 witnessed a happy reunion, when Mr. Hudson Taylor was at last able to pay a long-promised visit to SHAN-SI, and all the missionaries gathered at the capital to meet him. Days of blessing * followed, as in that inland city they waited on the LORD, and found refreshment in mutual fellowship and communion.

* *Days of Blessing*, compiled by Mr. Montagu Beauchamp, tells the story of this visit, and the Conferences, both native and foreign.

After the Conference in T'ai-yuen Mr. Taylor went south to meet the native Christians in the P'ing-yang district, and hold similar meetings there. Hung-t'ung, Mr. Stanley Smith's new station, was the first visited. Over a hundred church members assembled, for two days; the inner courtyard of the mission-house being set apart for the women, and the outer for the men. The meetings were full of life and power. As many as three hundred listeners gathered on Sunday morning, August 1st, and wonderful testimonies were given to the saving CHRIST. On the second day of the Conference a deeply impressive service was held, at which a number of the native Christians were set apart as elders and deacons. Mr. Hsi, up to that time an elder at P'ing-yang, was ordained Superintending Pastor of the whole district, and another devoted native brother was appointed to P'ing-yang.

A few days later a similar Conference was held in that city, when about fifty Christians gathered, and there also men were set apart for the work. None of these helpers received regular salaries, many of them, on the contrary, giving largely of their substance to the LORD.

Mr. Taylor, who had never before been so far inland, felt it a great privilege to be able thus to visit SHAN-SI. For the first time he found himself in one of the nine formerly unevangelised provinces for which he had so long laboured and prayed. The parting came all too soon. He was going on south-west, three or four hundred miles overland, to Han-chung; and those who were remaining went out

A COUNTRY ROAD IN NORTHERN CHINA.

to bid him a long farewell. It was the middle of August, and overpoweringly hot, so the start was made at night.

"The first stage was by moonlight," wrote Mr. Stanley Smith, "and we accompanied them some way. A few last words of helpful counsel, a few last words of mutual love, a few last words in solemn stillness, as with hands locked in his we each received his parting blessing, and the visit to SHAN-SI—so long expected, so long deferred, but now so blessed in its outcome, so treasured in our hearts—was over."

From that time the development of the work all over southern SHAN-SI was rapid and wonderful.

Earnest spirituality and devotion on the part of the missionaries was met with equal consecration and enthusiasm amongst the native helpers. All had but one aim—to spread the knowledge of the love of JESUS; and the women were not behind the men, as the following incident will attest:—

"Some time before the Conferences, the city of Hoh-chau, on the main road to the capital, was much on the heart of Pastor Hsi. Day by day, at family prayers, he pleaded for that place and neighbourhood, deeply feeling its spiritual destitution. At last his wife said to him—

"You are always praying for Hoh-chau. Why do you not go and commence an Opium Refuge there, as you have done in so many other places?"

"I have spent all," he replied, "that I can use in this way; unless the LORD supply the means, no more can be attempted."

"Why," she responded, "what do you think it would cost?"

"Twenty to thirty thousand cash," he answered gravely. (About five pounds sterling.)

When the wife heard that she went away and said no more. But she could not forget it. There was a city needing the Gospel. Here were ready, willing workers, longing to enter it. But means were lacking. What could she do?

Next morning the good Pastor pleaded, as usual, the need and darkness of Hoh-chau. What was his surprise, as he rose from his knees, to see his wife standing beside him with all her jewellery, including many much-prized possessions, which she handed to him, saying—

"I can do without these. Sell them, and let Hoh-chau have the Gospel."

Christian sisters, how many of us have ever done as much? In how many a jewel case, in how many a wardrobe, "costly array" is treasured, while hundreds of similar cities are to-day unentered, and missions on all hands lack funds? Might we not echo that Chinese woman's words—

"*I can do without these. Let Hoh-chau have the Gospel.*"

An Opium Refuge was soon opened in that city, and a good work commenced. But there, as in all the neighbouring stations, there was no one to go to the women.

Lady-workers were badly wanted, and this need led to much prayer, until in the winter of 1886 a new house was taken in Hoh-chau, specially for work amongst the women. Two Norwegian ladies, Misses Reuter and Jakobsen, came down. Their lives of singular Christ-likeness and devotion were exceedingly blessed in that station, and thus began a woman's work in southern SHAN-SI, much on the lines of that commenced a few months earlier along the Kwang-sin River.

The year that followed was one of remarkable in-gathering. Pastor Hsi and his wife came to live with Mr. Stanley Smith and Mr. Hoste at Hung-t'ung; but, though their hands were thus strengthened, they had more than they could do to overtake the work. Hundreds of villages surrounded them in the populous mountain valleys, and the Christians, widely scattered, had to be visited in their own homes. In scores of

houses the idols had been destroyed, and Christian worship was conducted daily, it being quite a common thing to see texts put up outside the doors, instead of idolatrous papers, for good luck.

During April and May, two hundred and fifty persons were baptised in this part of the province, two hundred and sixteen of whom were at Hung-t'ung.

Very memorable was the day on which fifty-two women and one hundred and fifty-eight men thus confessed CHRIST at one station. It was Saturday, April 23rd, 1887, in the midst of a three days' Conference, at which three hundred Christians and inquirers were assembled. The enthusiasm of the meetings it would be impossible to describe. Pastor Hsi spoke with wonderful power, and the testimonies from the Christians were deeply impressive.

So large an ingathering was the cause of great rejoicing when the tidings were received in England; but many in China could not but question the wisdom of baptising two hundred and sixteen people at one station in one day.

The incident calls up a wide and important question in missionary policy—whether persons should be baptised upon profession, merely, of their faith in CHRIST, or whether sufficient time should be required for them to give full and satisfactory evidence of a change of heart and life.

The dear workers at Hung-t'ung now act upon the latter principle, having fully come to see that nothing short of clear evidence of a turning from sin

to GOD is sufficient to warrant baptism and outward membership in the flock of CHRIST. But in 1887 some of the brethren in that station did not fully realise the importance of this course. Of the two hundred and sixteen baptised in the spring of that year many subsequently gave cause for sorrow; but on the whole, they were a band of sincere believers. For when, after the lapse of six years, Mr. Hoste carefully examined the Church roll at Hung-t'ung to see what had become of the two hundred and sixteen baptised in April 1887, *one hundred and thirty-five were found to be still in regular fellowship with the Church.* Seven had been transferred; four had been removed by death; twenty had been lost sight of; and fifty were known to be backsliders, the majority of whom had returned to opium smoking. Very few had relapsed into idolatry.

That one hundred and thirty-five should have stood the test of six years certainly speaks well for the work.

Time fails to follow further the details of recent developments in SHAN-SI. Suffice it to say, that in the four years from 1886 to 1890 over six hundred baptisms had taken place. Eight new stations were opened during the same time in various parts of the province, three of them occupied by ladies only.

At the time of Dr. Schofield's death two little bands of workers, with fifty or sixty converts, in two widely separated stations, had been the only Christians among nine millions of heathen. In 1890, seven years later, there were more than forty

missionaries of the C. I. M. working in the same sphere, at ten stations, with thirty native helpers, and between seven and eight hundred native Christians. And since that time the work has gone on growing, until now, in 1893, more than seventy missionaries are labouring in seventeen stations in SHAN-SI.

How little, even so, in a region as large as England and Wales put together!

Mr. Hoste and Pastor Hsi are still labouring at Hung-t'ung, Mr. Studd, no longer connected with the Inland Mission, holds the fort in a neighbouring city, while the other members of the Cambridge Band are all occupying important C. I. M. stations in western China.

GOD has used them, and taught them many lessons, fitting them for wider service in days to come. Does one of them regret, now, the consecration that led them to China? Would one of them return and choose an easier pathway? No, a thousand times no! Every word, every appeal of theirs they would re-echo to-day with tenfold earnestness. What they have given they would give again, and more if it were possible; counting it an honour to follow in His footprints who yielded *Himself* "for the life of the world."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE COMING OF THE HUNDRED.

1886 WAS fast drawing to a close. To all responsible for the Mission, it had been a busy and eventful year. A steadily increasing wave of enthusiasm had for some time been rising in connection with the C. I. M. The prayer for the Seventy and their being given had attracted not a little attention; and the overwhelming sympathy and interest aroused by the Cambridge Band had suddenly lifted the work into prominence and popularity throughout English-speaking lands. Many candidates were applying for China. And all were wanted. For upon the field openings seemed more and more to abound. But reinforcements were not the only need.

With the rapid growth and development of the Mission *new* wants began to be pressingly felt. Before the coming of the Seventy, when the total staff of the C. I. M. was under one hundred, and its stations only about threescore, it was comparatively an easy matter for Mr. Taylor to supervise and direct the whole. But now the workers

numbered considerably over two hundred, and the stations and out-stations one hundred and eight, scattered in fourteen provinces—a territory almost five times as large as Germany—it was much more difficult to give to all the help and counsel they required.

For two years Mr. Taylor had been in China. Before leaving England, early in 1885, he had fully discussed with the Council the pressing question of how best to meet the claims of the rapidly growing work. Much thought and prayer were given to this subject, and a careful scheme devised that was laid before the brethren on the field.

Meanwhile Mr. Taylor had been enabled to visit many of the older stations, and to take more than one long inland journey. He had travelled with the sisters down the Kwang-sin River, in KIANG-SI, and started them in their new work; he had gone round by T'ien-tsin to visit the Cambridge Band in their recently opened stations, twelve hundred miles to the north-west; he had crossed the Yellow River and the plains of SHEN-SI to cheer the lonely workers at Hang-chung; and had come down the rapid waters of the Han and the Yang-tsi to the coast. He had met a large proportion of the Seventy, had found them happy in their work, quite at home in the language, and very busy amongst the people. He had seen that they were none too many for the sphere to be occupied, and that even in spite of their presence every station was still crying out for more

labourers. But now his return to England could be no longer delayed, and arrangements must be completed for carrying on the work in his absence.

One charm of the Inland Mission during its earliest years had been the great simplicity of its principles and arrangements. The C. I. M. was just a large family, and knew no rules nor red-tapeism. Mr. Hudson Taylor was its responsible head in China, and Mr. Berger directed the work at home. Now, however, from a family it had grown into a clan, or group of families, needing more organisation in its management. But the principles upon which it had been founded remained the same, and were capable of development. Hitherto Mr. Taylor had been able to guide the work wisely, because he himself was a missionary, acquainted with the country and language, and personally present on the field. More help of this sort was urgently needed. But direction from home, however kindly, could not possibly supply it. To multiply himself, in China, was the only way.

All over the Mission men of experience were wanted to whom younger workers could turn for counsel and help. And in Shanghai a Deputy-Director had become a necessity ; some one to attend to the China correspondence ; to receive and forward money to the Interior ; to welcome new parties as they arrived ; and to act without delay in every matter of gravity during Mr. Taylor's absence from headquarters.

In the gradual growth of the work, men of grace and experience, fitted for such responsibilities, had naturally been developed. Here and there among the stations they were to be found. All that was needed was that the Mission should recognise such, and that they themselves should be willing to assume the onerous duties involved in godly rule, and to sacrifice a measure of their own direct missionary service for the wider interest of the work.

Ten of the senior brethren, after prayerfully considering the subject, consented to help Mr. Taylor by becoming thus responsible for the stations in their several districts. And for the more difficult post of Deputy-Director, at Shanghai, the right man was also provided.

Twenty years of missionary experience in China and Upper Burmah had remarkably fitted Mr. J. W. Stevenson for the duties he was now to assume. Arriving in China before the *Lammermuir* party, he had been used of GOD to open the great city of Shao-hing to the Gospel. After eight years of devoted and successful work in that centre, he returned to England on furlough. Western China, *viâ* Burmah, was his next call. With Mr. Henry Soltau he founded the first mission-station at Bhamô, and six years later crossed from the Irrawaddy to the Pacific by the Yang-tsi valley, thus traversing China for the first time from west to east. After a further spell of work at Bhamô, and a second visit to England, Mr. Stevenson returned again to China, intending to

make the province of YUN-NAN his parish. He reached Shanghai in December 1885, full of spiritual power and blessing. Mr. Taylor pressingly needed help in various matters, so that Mr. Stevenson was unable to go at once inland. Several journeys were taken to distant stations, including those recently opened in SHAN-SI, and it became clear to Mr. Taylor, and many others, that GOD had prepared this man to fill the difficult post of Deputy-Director in China. After much thought and prayer Mr. Stevenson consented, fully realising the responsible labours involved; and more than seven years of faithful service have attested his call of GOD to the work.

The new helpers thus given were formed into an advisory Council, to assist Mr Taylor in China in the same way as the London Council had long done at home. The month of November 1886 witnessed their first meeting, when Mr. Taylor, Mr. Stevenson, and five of the provincial Superintendents gathered at Gan-k'ing for several days of fasting and prayer followed by business meetings.

Little did they think, as they prayerfully pondered the needs of the work, how far-reaching would be the outcome of those days spent with GOD. Many matters of importance came under consideration, including urgent appeals from most of the stations for more helpers, both men and women. Everywhere open doors! everywhere need of labourers! How many were wanted it would be hard to say. At any rate, fifty stations could be found where additional

workers would be thankfully welcomed. The call was pressing, urgent! What could be done to meet it?

"Shall we not pray," suggested Mr. Stevenson, "for immediate reinforcements — *a hundred new workers during the coming year?*"

A hundred? What a request! But indeed they would not be one too many. With over a hundred stations and out-stations, and the whole of China marvellously opened for, at any rate, evangelistic effort, *one* hundred, after all, was but a small supply.

Faith burned brightly in every heart. Then and there the Hundred were asked and accepted from GOD, in fullest confidence; after which the new Council set to work to make the best arrangements in their power for receiving them during 1887.

In view of such large reinforcements, it was necessary to organise a plan by which the young workers might be helped as much as possible in beginning their missionary life. Careful attention to this subject is a most important element in the success of any mission. How full the first years are of difficulty and risk only those who have passed through them can fully know. Everything in the after-service may depend upon the missionary's introduction to his or her sphere. Habits are formed and ideas contracted of the utmost influence in days to come. Dangers to the spiritual life abound. Mistakes, from ignorance of the customs and manners of the people, are very easy to make, but difficult to repair. The mind is open to right influences and

impressions, as perhaps never again. In a word, those months or years are like the first decade in the life of a child—formative for the future. How important, then, at such a time, that the young missionary should be under the influence of those who know the danger and the needs, and whose sympathy and experience are devoted to his service, for CHRIST'S sake! How important that competent teachers of the language, both foreigners and natives, should be at his disposal; that kindly supervision in matters of health and acclimatisation should be afforded him; that good and economical housekeeping should be provided, and his time and thoughts saved from all such details for his preparatory studies; that helpful friends should be at hand who have practically tasted the faith principles and the missionary methods upon which he is to work, and who can speak from a personal knowledge of their adaptability and usefulness; and above all that the most earnest, spiritual influences should be brought to bear upon his life, to deepen consecration, quicken zeal, and in every way gird him for the coming battle, in which he will have to stand so much alone!

Realising the exceeding value of such arrangements, Mr. Taylor and the China Council proceeded to plan homes for receiving and training newly arrived missionary candidates.* Miss M. Murray,

* The Home Departments of the C. I. M. only accept and send out workers to China as probationers. After two years

at Yang-chau, was thankfully recognised as given of GOD for the work of helping sisters. She consented to devote herself to this branch of service, and Mr. and Mrs. Baller undertook to receive the young men at Gan-k'ing. The mission premises in both these centres were suitably enlarged, and set apart for their new, important use.

The next step was the preparation of a series of class books to facilitate progress in the language. A complete course of study was also sketched out divided into six sections, including all that is most essential for a missionary to know. Mr. Baller, an admirable Chinese scholar, with the help of Mr. Landale and four competent native teachers, commenced the laborious task of preparing the books, which has since been continued with the most satisfactory results. Thus, on the arrival of the first party of the Hundred in China, all was ready to receive them, and every help could be placed at their disposal.

Words fail to tell the strength and blessing that the Inland Mission has derived from these apparently simple arrangements. Certainly its remarkable increase and development since that time would have been impossible, but for the organisation thus introduced.

The presence of the Deputy-Director and China

in the field, when suitability has been fully proved, they are accepted by the China Department, and enrolled as junior missionaries.

CHINA COUNCIL OF THE C. I. M., SHANGHAI, APRIL, 1892.

Council always upon the field, in touch with the daily interests of every station, and of the provincial Superintendents scattered over the country, ready at any time to give needed aid, have made it possible for Mr. Hudson Taylor to be frequently away from China, attending to the home claims of the Mission in various lands. In spite of his absence, the work has been attended to in every part, and important matters, requiring immediate decision, have been settled without delay.

"GOD'S best gifts to the Church are men"—men and women filled with His SPIRIT, and fitted for the duties He assigns. In the Inland Mission a period of rapid growth and extension was at hand. Up to this time new arrivals had been received at the older stations, and passed on without any regular plan. Now, however, that the Hundred were expected in one year, former resources would have been utterly swamped, and the whole Mission burdened. But the LORD, foreseeing the need, had prepared willing, skilful helpers, and when the time came the organisation was possible.

These devoted men and women have been precious gifts of GOD to us as a Mission. Losing their own lives in the service of others, they have willingly made of all their endowments of knowledge, experience, and grace, stepping-stones by which younger workers may the more readily cross initial difficulties and attain efficiency in the great cause for which all are united. Those of us who know something of the

help and blessing thus afforded, thank GOD for these buried lives that bring forth "much fruit."

Had nothing else been the result of the Gan-k'ing Conference, it would have been most memorable in the history of the Inland Mission for this alone—that the Yang-chau and Gan-k'ing Homes were then established. Homes they have been in the truest sense—centres of love and usefulness, felt to the utmost verge of our wide sphere.* But this was not the only outcome. A definite request had been registered in heaven. Faith had claimed a great gift from GOD—one hundred new missionaries within the following year! What was the result?

A hundred workers for one Mission within a year—and that the China Inland Mission! A thrill of surprise and wonder followed the record of this prayer on its way to England and around the world. Surely the men must be very bold, or very foolish, who made such a request. A faith Mission, that had already almost doubled its number since 1881; that had no guarantee funds or influential committee to back it up in case of emergency; a Mission that would not go into debt, even if the worst came to

* One most useful feature of these Training Homes is the excellent opportunity they give for studying the various characters and qualifications of the young workers, so that appointments to future spheres can be made with much more intelligent probability of success. Opportunity for the formation of friendships also is afforded, which may prove most helpful in indicating who should be thrown together when the time comes for leaving the Homes.

the worst, and no money were forthcoming; a Mission dependent, apparently, upon the efforts of one man for support and direction—*such* a Mission to ask for a hundred new workers in one year! What could they be thinking of?

Ah! they were thinking of the vast needs of China; of the shortness of the time; of the Master's great command, disobeyed and unregarded by the Church; and of the boundless resources of GOD. A hundred, at any rate, were needed. And for a hundred they would pray. This was in November 1886.

What was the story of the following year?

In the month of January Mr. Taylor left for home, the tidings of the Gan-k'ing Conference having preceded him. The long voyage ended at Marseilles; he found letters awaiting him there, telling that twenty-five new candidates for China had already been accepted by the Council. Upon arrival in England he found the number raised to thirty, while funds had come in even more rapidly; and of the £5,500 required for passages and outfits, almost half was already in hand. No one had been asked for a penny. No appeals had been made. The facts had simply been stated. And this was the response of a prayer-hearing GOD to the faith of His children.

Profoundly encouraged, Mr. Hudson Taylor and those at home were cheered to go forward into the overwhelming work and serious responsibilities of that year, feeling sure that GOD, who was answering their prayer for men and means, would give them

wisdom in the selection of the workers, and guidance about everything connected with sending them out.

Meanwhile, all over China prayer was continually going up about the matter. The Yang-chau and Gan-k'ing homes were full and busy. Lonely toilers in many distant stations were cheered with the prospect of reinforcements, so much needed. And from end to end of the land there were many who daily joined in singing, to the old familiar tune—

"Oh, send the hundred workers, LORD!
Those of Thy heart and mind and choice,
To tell Thy love both far and wide,
So shall we praise Thee and rejoice.
And above the rest this note shall swell,
Our JESUS hath done all things well."

The lovely month of May brought round the annual meetings, and the twenty-first anniversary of the Mission. It was the year of the Queen's Jubilee; and naturally thought was carried back half a century, to the time when China had been a sealed land. The death of Dr. Morrison, shortly before, had left two young American missionaries the sole representatives of Protestant Christianity in China. Living under the protection of fellow-countrymen engaged in commerce at Canton, they were unable to travel anywhere beyond the city, and were sadly hampered and restricted in their efforts; while before them stretched the whole vast, populous land, utterly unreached by the Gospel. Only fifty years' interval. And now, at the Jubilee, China, from end to end, was

open to evangelisation; missionaries and their wives were living in almost all the provinces; and the C. I. M. alone, with a staff of two hundred and twenty-five workers, upon attaining its majority, was appealing for a hundred to reinforce its ranks *in one year!* How notable a change!

"We have been led to pray," said Mr. Taylor, at the anniversary meetings, "for a hundred new workers this year. We have the sure word, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.' Resting on this promise, it would not have added to our confidence one whit, if, when we began to pray in November, my dear brother-in-law, Mr. Broomhall, had sent out a printed list of a hundred accepted candidates. We had been spending some days in fasting and prayer for guidance and blessing before the thought was first suggested to our minds. We began the matter aright—with GOD—and we are quite sure that we shall end aright. It is a great joy to know that thirty-one of the Hundred are already in China, but it is a greater joy still to be assured that many more than a hundred of our members, there, are banded together in daily pleading with GOD to send the whole number out.

"He is giving us encouragement. A letter of inquiry about the new missionaries and funds led me, a few days ago, to ask in our office how the accounts stood. I found that sufficient money had come in to cover all the outlay connected with those who are already gone. Some of them were Associates, and their expenses were met independently of us. Others had used their own means. And sufficient had come in for the remainder. But there was not enough in hand to send out even one additional worker. I was much struck by this fact, because I have

frequently asked my brother-in-law whether it was not possible for more of the accepted volunteers to go forward before the summer, and he has each time assured me that it was out of the question, the circumstances of every one requiring delay. Thus I saw that GOD had supplied amply sufficient to cover all the outfit and travelling expenses of those who were able to go. It seemed like the fingers of a hand, and of a glove, so perfectly did the circumstances correspond. The way had not been opened for any of those twenty accepted candidates to go out in the spring, and GOD did not provide the money to send them.

"But this very day, at noon, from another country a cheque for £500 reached me towards the further expenses of the Hundred. We have also a promise of £2,000 to be paid on the 1st of July. This of course will be far from sufficient to complete what is needed. Nearly £4,000 will be required. But if it were forty thousand it would be nothing to the LORD. It would mean a great deal of blessing to a great many donors, for we have been earnestly praying that GOD will richly bless each one who gives to this fund. But, thank GOD, it is not forty thousand that is required, although it would be no more difficult for our Father to supply.

"Be careful for nothing; prayerful for everything.

"I do want you, dear friends, to realise this principle of working with GOD, and trusting Him for all. If the work is at the command of GOD we can go to Him with fullest confidence for workers. And when GOD gives the workers, then we can go to Him for the means. We always accept a suitable volunteer, whether we have funds in hand or not. Then we very often say,—

"Now, dear friend, your first work will be to join us in praying for the money to send you to China.

"As soon as there is money enough, the time of year and other circumstances being suitable, the volunteer goes

out. We do not wait until there is a remittance in hand to give him when he gets there. The LORD will, in the meanwhile, provide the means, and the money will be wired to China in time to supply his wants.

"Let us see that we keep GOD before our eyes; that we walk in His ways, and seek to please and glorify Him in everything, great and small. Depend upon it, GOD'S work done in GOD'S way will never lack GOD'S supplies."

The autumn that followed proved the truth and reality of this faith; for before the year was ended the last detachment of the Hundred sailed, and a further party, including the writer, was also arranged for, that left in January 1888.

The increase of numbers on the field in no wise diminished the family feeling, so strong in the C. I. M.

"I have had to do," said Mr. Baller, at the annual meetings of the following year, "with a large number of the Hundred, all the young men having come to Gan-k'ing. And it has been an unspeakable blessing and privilege to help them in preparing for their work. We have tried, as far as possible, to make Gan-k'ing a home. . . . I feel towards the dear fellows I have left there just as though they were my own sons. . . .

"Ours has been a most representative household. We have included men from almost every part of this country—from Land's End to John o' Groat's, and from Ireland, Wales, Sweden, and Norway. But there has been perfect union and harmony amongst us. Whatever differences of thought or opinion have arisen, all have been lost sight of in one supreme aim—that CHRIST may be glorified in the salvation of the Chinese.

"In the name of the brethren I have left behind, I

thank you for your prayers and sympathy, and for your gifts. The battle is only just beginning. We want each one of them to quit himself as a good soldier of JESUS CHRIST. Continue to pray for them. Continue to pray for us all."

Six years have passed since then, and most of those who came out in the Hundred are experienced missionaries to-day. Five have been called Home to their reward; seventy-eight are still in our ranks doing valued service; and of the seventeen who have left us, several have joined other missions, and are still labouring in China.

THE HUNDRED WHO JOINED THE MISSION IN 1887.
(*For Names see p.* 511.)

CHAPTER XXXI.

OUR LAST SIX YEARS.

JUST before Christmas 1887, when the last of the Hundred were on the eve of departure for China, a young American stranger came to Pyrland Road to see Mr. Hudson Taylor. A successful man of business in the state of New York, Mr. H. W. Frost, had a warm heart for missions, and recently had consecrated his life to GOD for service on behalf of China. Hearing of the C. I. M., his sympathies had been drawn towards it, specially on account of the simplicity and breadth of its principles.

"Here," thought he, "is a Mission that is sending out laymen from all evangelical denominations, provided they are spiritually fit for the work. There is room and need in our country for such an organisation as that."

And the more he prayed and pondered, the clearer did it become that he should go to England, and urge Mr. Taylor to establish a branch of the C. I. M. in North America.

The proposal was unexpected and interesting. But, to the visitor's great disappointment, Mr. Taylor's reply was not hopeful.

"The LORD has given me no light about it. I do not think it is His purpose thus to extend the work."

This was the first step.

The second was, that a few weeks later another American stranger reached Pyrland Road, bringing a request from Mr. Moody that Mr. Taylor would come to Northfield for the Students' Summer School of the following year. About the same time a letter also arrived, asking him to take part in the Niagara Conference of July. Both these invitations were accepted, but without any thought of the important results destined to follow.

A two months' visit to the United States and Canada, *en route* for China, was all that Mr. Taylor planned; but it was not all that was purposed in the counsels of GOD. The Mission that during the previous twenty-one years had so rapidly extended its borders in China, was now to develop its home organisation as well, and spread to other lands, embracing not only workers from all sections of the Church in Great Britain and Ireland, but from Protestant communities on the Continent also, and from far-distant countries, peopled with the English-speaking race.

Limitations of space forbid our entering here upon the story of the North American branch of the C. I. M. Many are familiar with it already. They have followed Mr. Taylor through the crowded, impressive meetings held at Northfield, Niagara, and Chicago; have felt with him the wonder and solemnity of that midnight hour at Attica, when he learnt that from most unexpected sources money had

been contributed to support eight American workers in connection with our Mission; have sympathised with the unusual perplexity he experienced in finding himself thus possessed of money, but with no men to use it; and have realised the sense of responsibility that overwhelmed him, when he saw that he must pray for missionaries, and organise without delay the very extension he had declined only a few months before. Many have traced the hand of GOD in bringing together the first band of fourteen, who sailed with Mr. Taylor just twelve weeks after he had landed in New York without a thought of their existence; and have marvelled at the providences connected with the formation of the tentative Toronto Council, which undertook to carry on the North American work.

Suffice it to say that the story is ere long to be fully told in pamphlet form, when it will be obtainable at the offices of the Mission.

Unparalleled blessing and encouragement had now for several years attended the efforts of the C. I. M. Since the prayer for the Seventy, at the close of 1881, its numbers had steadily increased, its sphere had extended, its income grown, its organisation developed; and now for the first time it had taken root in new and fruitful soil, on the other side of the Atlantic. All this could not be without corresponding discipline and trial. And during 1888 dark clouds began to gather. Earnest and continued prayer had for some time been made that the LORD would keep the hearts of His servants in days of prosperity as in

days of adversity, and glorify Himself through all. These prayers were needed now.

Full of joyous anticipation, the first American party, on board the great Pacific steamer, sighted Japan. Mr. Taylor, after nearly two years' absence, was looking forward to reunion with the workers on the field, and eagerly expecting news. Already in the spring of the year three had been taken, by death, from the ranks of the Mission in China, but now the summer was over, and less danger was apprehended.

At Yokohama, a large bundle of letters was put into Mr. Taylor's hand. There was only time to glance through them and select the most recent. Prayerfully it was opened and scanned—then dropped, in sorrow and amazement! Adam Dorward and Herbert Norris—gone? What could it mean? The Lord makes no mistakes. But *these* two!

Dorward, the brave, patient pioneer of HU-NAN, the man whose life had been centred in one long, undaunted effort to win a footing in that province for the Gospel of Christ—who could ever fill his place? Norris, the beloved and gifted head-master at Chefoo, carried away by hydrophobia, from the bite of a dog he had driven from the playground in protecting his boys—who could be to them now what he had been, or wield his noble influence for good? The blow was severe, unexpected, and crushing in its weight.

"A few days later, upon reaching Shanghai," wrote Mr. Taylor, "the first news that met me was of the removal of our dear brother Sayers; and in the mission-house we

found Miss Barrett dying. From that time onward it seemed as though the Master were asking, almost daily, 'Can you say to this new trial: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight"?'

"Soon after we learnt of the sickness and removal of some of our leading native helpers, of trials in the way of persecution, and of defection too. Then the daughter of beloved Mr. Stevenson, my co-director in the work in China, was taken seriously ill; Mr. Eason also, who had just returned from his furlough, took typhoid fever, and a second and third in the house developed it at the same time, and were brought very low. We could not understand the LORD'S dealings; but we knew it was our Father's hand, and felt that perhaps He was giving us these sorrows lest we should be lifted up through the blessings of the year, which had been very great.

"He sustains and will sustain the spirit, however much the flesh may fail. But never was there more need for grace and help all round, especially for the leaders of the work. For while the spiritual tone of the Mission is higher than ever before, the trials and conflicts are many. We know the LORD'S ways are best, and we would not have them altered. Glad tidings of souls won for CHRIST, and of real progress in many directions, cheer us amid the sorrows."

And then, a little later:—

"Dear Maggie McKee is with the King. A telegram on January 11th brought us the news. She was only ill six days—black small-pox. One of our most promising flowers—the Master has taken her! Would we give Him weeds only? But I feel sometimes as if my heart must break."

In addition to all this, the exigencies of the work at home required Mr. Taylor's presence, so that in spite of the need on the field he was obliged to leave for England early in March '89.

In the midst of distress and difficulty, however, GOD was giving blessing. Thirteen new stations were opened in seven provinces, and more than four hundred and seventy souls were added to the Church during the twelve months, May '88 to '89. A large amount of relief-work also had been accomplished, in districts terribly desolated by famine and flood, in HO-NAN.*

Time fails to tell of all the progress made about this time in China; of encouragement in the older stations; of advance in the great province SI-CH'UEN; of the devotion of native Christians, and the opening up of fruitful fields through their unaided efforts; or of the growing usefulness of the Canadian band and those that followed them from North America. Events of still more importance claim our attention as we hasten to a close.

The summer that followed Mr. Taylor's return to England witnessed development in several departments of the home work. Inglesby House was opened as a centre for receiving and training young men for China, while 41 and 41a, Pyrland Road,

* In September '87 a breach had occurred in the embankments of the Yellow River, which flooded one-sixth of the province of HO-NAN, and wrought unutterable ruin. This whole region, larger than Wales and far more populous, was turned into a raging sea, the people all either drowned or fled! Drought and famine followed throughout adjacent provinces; and for two years the distress was beyond expression. As late as January '89 Dr. Doutnwaite wrote from Chefoo: "A district of 6,000 square miles is devastated so completely that a million and a half are reduced to the verge of starvation."

were secured for the young women candidates. A Ladies' Council was formed, and Miss Soltau became its Secretary.* Long training in the school of faith had specially fitted this beloved servant of GOD for the responsible duties that devolved upon her when she relinquished her large sphere in Hastings to come to London and take charge of the Women's Department of the C. I. M. Four years of fruitful labour, since that time, have fully proved her call of GOD to the work.

In Scotland sympathy with the Inland Mission had grown, until it was felt desirable to establish a regular centre at Glasgow. Eight gentlemen kindly undertook to form an Auxiliary Council, to test all applications north of the Tweed.†

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* The Ladies' Council was formed September 23rd, 1889. The first party that went out from Miss Soltau's sailed in September 1890. Altogether one hundred and four young missionary sisters have left that home for China. Three have been called to higher service above; one has been invalided and obliged to return to England; and one hundred are on the field to-day—January 1894.

† The present members of this Council are:—

George Graham Brown, Sec.	William M. Oatts, Hon. Sec.
Provost Colville, Motherwell.	Alexander Sloan, Glasgow.
Rev. J. Elder Cumming, D.D., Glasgow.	William Sloan, Helensburgh.
William Lamont, Greenock.	James Smith, Dundee.
J. S. Napier, Glasgow.	Charles Sherriffs, Aberdeen.
	R. B. Stewart, Stirling.

The Rev. George Wilson, of St. Michael's, Edinburgh, has also kindly promised to see candidates, forward contributions, and otherwise represent the work of the C. I. M. in Edinburgh.

A month's visit to Scandinavia in the autumn of the year also led to important results.

In response to a long-standing invitation from Pastor Holmgren, Secretary of the "Swedish Mission in China," Mr. Hudson Taylor, and his second son, Dr. Howard Taylor, went over to Sweden in November '89. During the days that followed twenty-four towns were visited, including Stockholm, Upsala, and Christiania, and fifty or sixty thousand persons were present at the meetings. Deep interest was awakened, and the Swedish and Norwegian China Missions, affiliated with the C. I. M., were helped and strengthened. These devoted workers now have twenty-five representatives on the field, supported by their own Churches, and labouring under the direction of the Inland Mission.

During the following summer deep interest in China was awakened in the neighbourhood of Barmen, near the Rhine. A German Alliance Mission was started on similar lines, which now has eight members working with us in China.

Since that time the Free Church of Finland, also, has sent three ladies to join us, the first missionaries to represent that country in the foreign field. And more recently, from the solitudes of Iceland, an offer of service has come, telling of consecrated hearts even there, prayerfully interested in China and the Inland Mission.

Thus the SPIRIT OF GOD, moving and guiding in many spheres, carries steadily forward the evangelisa-

tion of that great land. Here a seed-thought, there a living word, or the powerful influence of consecrated example—better than precept—all doing their silent work towards the supreme end.

Such a seed-thought, replete with living power, fell at this time into good ground.

It was early in October, 1889, and Mr. Hudson Taylor, wearied with continued labours, went down for a little rest to Hastings. Pondering and praying over the needs of China, he was struck afresh with the direct command expressed in the Master's words, "*To every creature.*" If he had not meant it He would not have said it. And since He both said it and meant it, we are responsible literally to obey.

This led to a careful consideration of what would be involved in carrying out the Divine commission and really preaching the Gospel "to every creature" in China during the present generation.

"Were the Government of England," wrote Mr. Taylor, "to determine on the conquest of a distant country, they would think it a small matter to land ten thousand troops on any part of the world's circumference; and the Church of GOD, to-day, could easily, within the next five years, preach the Gospel as a witness to every one of China's millions.

"No very great effort was needed in America to secure the signatures of over three thousand college students to a pledge that if GOD opened the way they would devote themselves to missionary enterprise. Were the enthusiasm and devotion of all our churches aroused, and not merely that

of a few individuals, more than that number of effective workers might easily be found on each side of the Atlantic for China alone. But no such numbers are needed in order that every man, woman, and child in that land should hear the Gospel once, at least.

"If, in addition to the workers now in the field, one thousand whole-hearted evangelists, male and female, were set free and kept free for this special work, they might reach the whole number of China's millions before the end of the year '95, and this allowing two years for study of the language and preparation for the work.

"Estimating the population of China as we do at two hundred and fifty millions, there will be about fifty millions of families. If fifty families, or one hundred and fifty adults, unreached before, were influenced daily for a thousand days, by each of the thousand evangelists, every family in China might hear the Gospel within a period of three years, leaving the workers two or three Sundays in every month for rest.

"If it be said that unexpected hindrances would be sure to arise, it must be remembered that this calculation takes no account of the large number of missionary workers already in China, nor of the native Christians, whose help would, of course, be invaluable.

"*Shall an undertaking which a thousand men and women might accomplish in three years of steady work, after two years' preparation, be thought chimerical, and beyond the resources of the Church of* CHRIST?"

The little paper, entitled *To Every Creature*, which embodied these facts, went forth at the close of the year '89. Soon it was scattered far and wide, bringing its stirring message to many a heart.

Five months later, the Missionary Conference, assembled in Shanghai, made their remarkable appeal

to the home churches. In words of intense earnestness they pleaded for *one thousand men within the next five years* for the work of Christian evangelisation in China.

"We make this appeal," they wrote, "on behalf of three hundred millions of unevangelised heathen; we make it with all the earnestness of our whole hearts, as men overwhelmed with the magnitude and responsibility of the work before us; we make it with unwavering faith in the power of a risen Saviour to call men into His vineyard, and to open the hearts of those who are His stewards to send out and sustain them, and we shall not cease to cry mightily to GOD that He will do this thing, and that our eyes may see it."

In other directions also the thought was taken up, notably among the Scandinavian Churches of the United States, who early in the following year sent out a detachment of fifty missionary evangelists, as part of their response.

That GOD was moving wondrously on behalf of China none could doubt, certainly none connected with the C. I. M.

Shortly before the Conference above alluded to, the new buildings forming our C. I. M. headquarters at Shanghai—provided by one kind donor without cost to the Mission—were completed and opened. Among the earliest arrivals welcomed there, was one young clergyman,* who had come all the way from

* The Rev. C. Parsons.

Australia to join the Inland Mission. His presence at the Conference was significant, for he was the forerunner of an Australian contingent, that bids fair to do its part towards the coming Thousand.

About the time that Mr. Taylor was writing his appeal for men and women to carry the Gospel "to every creature" in China without delay, other hearts were being stirred with the same impulse and longing, under the Southern Cross.

"The origin of the Australian branch of the C. I. M.," writes the Rev. Alfred Bird,* "was on this wise.

"Towards the close of 1889 the hearts of four ministers of the Gospel in Melbourne—two Episcopalians,† one Presbyterian, ‡ and one Baptist, § were stirred in a very special manner to consider and pray over the awful need of China, as the greatest heathen continent in the world, and the heathen continent geographically and commercially nearest to Australia.

"Although these ministers were close personal friends, the conviction that the Church of CHRIST in Australia ought to send the Gospel to China, was not a conviction caught from one another, or produced as the result of mutual Conference, but one that came upon them simultaneously. The first outcome was that one of these brethren offered himself for service in China, was accepted, and is now labouring in connection with the C. I. M. The three remaining brethren met on several occasions to consider how best the God-inspired desire and purpose could

* Then the Honorary Secretary of the Council in Melbourne.

† Rev. H. B. Macartney, Rev. C. Parsons.

‡ Rev Lockhart Morton.

§ Rev. A. Bird.

be fulfilled, and came speedily to the conclusion that the faith principles and interdenominational character of the C. I. M. made it the agency which would most fully and blessedly accomplish the end in view. The next thing was to find out how Australian Christians could co-operate with this organisation in London and in China.

"About this time it came to the knowledge of the brethren concerned, that the present beloved Australian Treasurer* was an old and tried friend of the Inland Mission. He was taken into consultation, and a letter was sent to the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor giving some account of what had already occurred, and naming the brethren interested.

"In the interval between sending the letter to Mr. Taylor and receiving his reply, Miss Mary Reed, of Tasmania, who had shortly before been invalided home from China, was invited to visit Victoria for the purpose of holding a series of drawing-room meetings. These proved to be of the most interesting and valuable character, and as a result many became deeply concerned for the evangelisation of China's millions, and some were led to personal surrender for this glorious service.

"A telegram from Mr. Taylor in Shanghai authorised the formation of an Australian branch of the Mission, and on May 22nd, 1890, the Council was formed in Melbourne, consisting of nine members.

"Soon after came the welcome news, that Mr. Taylor himself intended to visit the Australian colonies. He arrived in July 1890, and remained till November, when he returned to China accompanied by the first party of eleven missionaries. His meetings were fraught with unspeakable blessing to the churches visited, and resulted in a great missionary awakening in all the colonies."

* Philip Kitchen, Esq.

Under the helpful influence of its devoted Honorary Secretary the work grew rapidly, and spread to other Colonies. There are now Auxiliary Councils in Adelaide, Sydney, and Brisbane, while between thirty and forty workers are already on the field. "One pleasing feature," writes Mr. Bird, "of our present experience, is that more men are now offering than at any previous time, and many of them give promise of being in every way suited to the work."

A few weeks after Mr. Taylor's return to Shanghai with the first reinforcements from Australia, the largest missionary party ever known to arrive in China was given to the C. I. M. in one day, and that without our having done anything in the matter, either written a word, or spent a penny, or made one single effort to bring them; just given of GOD, in answer to prayer, part of the coming Thousand! They were the first thirty-five members of the Scandinavian China Alliance Mission, before alluded to, and were immediately followed by fifteen others, making a total of fifty within a fortnight.

Sent out and supported by the Scandinavian churches of North America, these earnest evangelists had come in direct response to the appeal for the Thousand. It was no small tax upon the resources of the Mission to undertake the reception of so large a party without much warning. But within a few days of their arrival all were in Chinese dress, hard at work studying the language, and before many weeks

had elapsed suitable accommodation had been provided for them in the Interior.

As typical of no unusual experience in the spacious compound of our Shanghai headquarters, the following notes are added :—

March 12th, 1891.

Thirteen of the Scandinavian brethren leave, to-night, for the Interior. How we shall miss them! Strangers only a few days ago, they are now dear to us in the LORD. Forth they step into the darkness, their faces bright with Heaven's own radiance, songs on their lips, and the music of love Divine filling their hearts. No fears, no forebodings. GOD for them, and their lives for the perishing.

* * * * * *

An hour ago, silence fell over the crowded room as the last words of our hymn died away, and Mr. Taylor, rising, came into the midst, and opened the Word of GOD. Eagerly all turned towards him, with the bright look upon each face that told of heart-expectancy. Quietly fell the precious words of the 146th Psalm, as he read, verse by verse, on to the triumphant end. And then he talked to us in his own way, each sentence the very essence of deep and blessed experience of what GOD is and can be to the soul that leans on Him alone.

It was all about "the LORD."

First—He "keepeth truth for ever." "To the dear brethren who are leaving us He says, 'Lo I am with you always.' Yes, and He 'keepeth truth for ever.' This has been the first home GOD has given you in China, but you will find that He has many homes here, and He will bring you to them as you go on. Wherever He is is home. Is not home always where the Father is? Well, He is

with us everywhere, and always. So we are never away from home.

"You may be oppressed sometimes in China, and unkindly treated. But the LORD 'executeth judgment for the oppressed.' You may sometimes be without money; your friends may forget you, or you may lose your all, and be in want. The LORD 'giveth food to the hungry.' You may be put in prison perhaps, for the Gospel's sake, as many good men have been before. The LORD 'looseth the prisoners.' And sometimes we are blind indeed, not seeing any way out of our difficulty, or how to find the right path. But it says, 'the LORD openeth the eyes of the blind.' How much better to be blind if He is leading us, and is going to open our eyes at the right time, than to be very sharp-sighted on our own account, and spy out a way for ourselves, that is sure to lead into difficulty and danger.

"And then sometimes we are 'bowed down.' Who is there here that has never been discouraged? Although we ought not to be, for it is a sin to be discouraged. Let us remember that 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged'; and while He does not, how dare we? If the General is going to win the battle the soldiers cannot lose it! Our JESUS has never lost a battle yet; so we are on the winning side. But sometimes we are 'bowed down.' Well, 'the LORD raiseth up them that are bowed down.'

And finally, whoever may hate or despise us, 'the LORD *loveth* the righteous.'

"And now let us remember it, 'the LORD shall reign for ever.' There will never be a day in your life or mine when the LORD is not reigning."

Upon our knees, with full hearts, we commended one another to GOD in prayer.

"Remember always, dear LORD, that they are not very strong, and let Thy strength be made perfect in their

weakness. Remember always that they are not very wise, and may Thy wisdom be their sufficiency."

His voice ceased. But, ere we could rise from our knees, dear brother Gullbrandson followed in impassioned pleading, his whole heart overflowing in broken words, and forceful quaint expression, carrying blessing with each sentence. And Hagquist followed, amid the fervently expressed sympathy of all the rest. Touching, manly, brave, and tender prayers, *all for Jesus* stamped on each petition.

As we stood together then, a moment, brother Pilquist's voice was heard saying that he wished to try and express the feeling of all their hearts towards those from whom they were parting to-night, the love, the gratitude. They felt as they had done when leaving their old homes in Scandinavia, leaving their fathers' roof. And he turned to Mr. Taylor standing there, and said, "I have found a father here in China and a home!" And many an earnest voice responded "Yes." "Amen." He thanked the Mission, on behalf of the Scandinavian Churches of America, and on behalf of the whole party—all the first Fifty, of whom only nineteen will be left with us now.

When he had finished speaking, and Mr. Taylor's reply was done, before anything further could be said, they burst again into song, and the room rang, through and through, with their soul-filled music. It was very touching to watch their faces then. So bright, so moved, so purposeful! The whole band seemed to gather to the chorus of their own special hymn—"*It's best to go singing, singing all the way.*" And to me they seemed, indeed, Heralds of Coming Footsteps! Thrust-forth labourers are these if ever there were any. The plentiful harvest is waiting. At the eleventh hour He sends in His last reapers, simple earnest loyal-hearted lovers of the Lord; sends them in to garner the precious sheaves, and join the Harvest Home.

A little later, in the darkness, they gather to say good-bye. The lamplight falls on the group at the foot of the verandah steps, upon which the singers stand to lead their last united song of praise.

A solemn feeling of wonder is upon many hearts, what is this the LORD is doing in our very midst? Heralds of Coming Footsteps! Ye go forth, surely, in response to the midnight cry. Yes, let it ring round China, and back again across the ocean foam, to the homelands sleeping far over the seas, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh! We go to meet Him!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

"*MUCH MORE THAN THIS.*"

MANY, very many memories of GOD'S great goodness still remain to be recorded. But for the present our story is done.

Three months after the arrival of the Scandinavian Fifty, the C. I. M. completed a missionary experience of a quarter of a century. Wonderful was the advance those years had witnessed.

As the *Lammermuir* party put out to sea, that bright May morning in 1866, what had been the position of the little group of workers they went to reinforce? Far away among the broad plains of CHEH-KIANG, a native boat was slowly traversing the rivers and canals that stretch between the Venice of China and the great city of Ning-po. On board her were two passengers from Shao-hing, Messrs. Meadows and Stevenson, who had just succeeded in renting a small house in that important centre, thus opening the *third* station of the infant Mission. Three stations, in one province, near the shore-line of the Yellow Sea; seven missionaries, two of whom were ladies; and the outward-bound friends in the *Lammermuir*—that was all.

Twenty-five years later, 93 stations and a band of 480 workers scattered throughout 14 provinces, testified to the faithfulness of a prayer-hearing GOD.

Two years have passed since then; and now, in January 1894, the Inland Mission is at work in 110 principal stations, with more than 100 out-stations; its members and associates number over 550; its native helpers 326; and its present roll of baptised communicants, about 4,000. Seven different Missions from Europe and America are labouring in connection with us, while fourteen nationalities and all evangelical sections of the Church of CHRIST are represented in our ranks.

Thus, at the close of twenty-seven years, we pause to review, with gratitude to GOD, the way by which His hand has led us hitherto. How often, midst our blindness, failure of faith, weakness, shortcomings, fears, His grace has triumphed and His strength prevailed! How often He has answered prayer, fulfilled the promises of His precious Word, sustained and strengthened those whose only trust is in His mercy, and proved Himself sufficient for all the needs of His own work!

"In connection with this Mission, weak in human resources," writes Dr. Grattan Guinness, "and yet the largest Mission in the largest mission-field in the world, this passage is much upon my heart:—

"'What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?'

"And its magnificent answer:—

"'Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the GOD of Jacob.'

"John Wesley has well said: '*The best of all is—GOD is with us.*' Let this be our confidence and our song. He before whom the earth trembles assuredly is in us and with us."

Strong in this faith we can go forward to meet the future with its wider needs and ever-growing work. The time is short, the Master's call is urgent. The past is but an inspiration for the future, a vantage ground from which to press on with renewed faith and quickened zeal. Far from satisfied with what has already been accomplished, the leaders of the Inland Mission and many of its workers look forward with deep desire to future developments more in proportion to the greatness of the need. Providential indications, also, clearly point to growth and extension yet to come.

In connection with our home department, the most recent developments are suggestive. Upon a piece of freehold land, the property of the Mission, building operations are now commencing, quite close to Pyrland Road. Suitable offices, a meeting-room, and missionary home, are to be erected on this site; and further premises to accommodate the women's branch, under the care of Miss Soltau, for which a special gift of £4,000 has just been received.*

* There is also room for a third large building, facing Newington Green, needed for permanent offices, and the young men's department of the home work. When funds are given for the

Out in China, also, commodious premises are soon to be constructed, at Chefoo, to meet the growing needs of our Mission schools for European children. One donation of £5,000 has recently been promised for this purpose, and the buildings, long wanted, will greatly facilitate the work.

Do not such facts and providences, like lengthened cords and strengthened stakes, point to coming enlargement and blessing?

Surely our GOD, whom we trust, is able to do wondrously, beyond anything faith has yet apprehended! "*Much more than this*" must be our watchword if China is really to be evangelised in these last days.

In answer to prayer GOD has opened this vast land to the efforts of His people. More than fifty Societies, with a total staff of about sixteen hundred missionaries, are to be found in China to-day. Medical Missions, Schools, Christian literature, and many other agencies are gradually influencing thought and feeling—doing a widespread work, often unseen. But as yet, even in regions longest evangelised, the great masses of the people are in total ignorance of the Gospel.

The accompanying map represents the principal stations occupied by all Protestant Missions in China. Thank GOD they are now dotted far and wide across

purpose, this building will be put in hand, completing our London head-quarters, and liberating the Missionary Home for its own special uses.

that continental length and breadth—but how many a vast expanse still stretches between them! Those sombre seas of heathen darkness might float on their black waters many a Christian land. Three Englands would lie easily, side by side, south of the Yang-tsi River, where no white dots indicate light-centres to pierce the gloom. And beyond the limits of this little map, hundreds of miles to north and west, extend great countries still within the borders of the Empire—all unreached, all shrouded in Christless night.

Rightly is it a map in mourning; black as heathenism is at heart. How long it shall remain so rests with us. "CHRIST alone can save the world; but CHRIST cannot save the world alone." He waits for you and me to be His fellow-workers. Shall He still wait in vain?

What is to hinder the darkness of this land from being illumined with the light of GOD? Nothing—save our indifference, lack of power, lack of love! Have we not all the resources of CHRIST at the disposal of faith, wherewith to do the work? Have we not the Divine command? Have we not the almighty, indwelling enablement of the HOLY GHOST? To men and women filled with the SPIRIT nothing shall be impossible. It is in ourselves we are straitened. It is darkness within that hinders us from banishing that night of sin. Is there anything that weakens faith so much as the lack of a clean conscience? While we are living in comfort

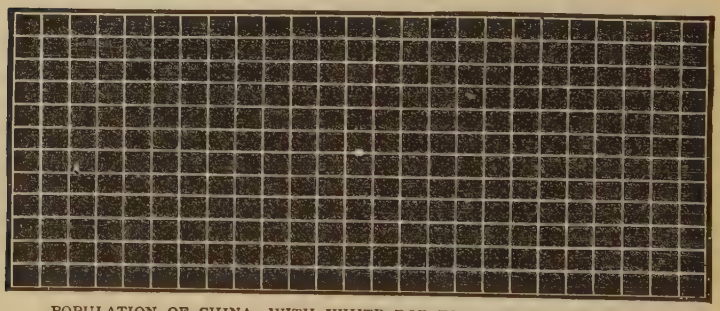
PRINCIPAL STATIONS OF ALL PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN CHINA.

and ease, unwilling to give to the point of suffering, to empty ourselves for the life of the world, is not our selfish forgetfulness making faith, for us, impossible; cutting us off from Divine power; deepening the darkness of heathendom's millions by hiding the light that was meant to shine, through us, on them?

Still, a vast work remains. And it must begin in our own hearts. When CHRIST has fully conquered there, He can use us to bless the world. Let us pray,

then, and ponder over this land in shadow, asking whether our lives are really helping to bring it light. GOD grant that, individually and as a Mission, we may know more of the shining of His face, and increasingly reflect that brightness upon others.

Twenty-seven years ago, when the C. I. M. was founded, the need and darkness of inland China were our *raison d'être*. Great has been the advance since then. Scores of stations are now opened, and hundreds of converts gathered, where at that time the name of JESUS was unknown. But we must not on this account relax our efforts. All the converts of all Protestant Missions put together as yet only number about 50,000, so small a proportion of the whole population as to be almost imperceptible.



POPULATION OF CHINA, WITH WHITE DOT FOR NATIVE CHRISTIANS.

On the accompanying diagram every square represents a million souls. More than two hundred and ninety-nine of these millions are still living, dying, afar from GOD. One twentieth of the remaining square is amply sufficient to represent those whose

lives are lighted with wisdom from on high. Consider for a moment what this means.

The daily death-rate and birth-rate in China each average about 27,000. In other words, that little white spot which stands for our 50,000 Christians, would be completely blotted out *within two days*, by the deaths alone, from among the heathen; while the simple birth-rate in that vast land would far more than outnumber those it represents *three times within a week*. We have not yet begun to overtake the natural *increase* of the population, to say nothing of influencing the whole nation for GOD.

It is time indeed that the Church of CHRIST should awake to her responsibilities. "We have been acting as though we had an eternity to do the work, and the people whom we seek to reach an eternity on earth in which to be reached; whereas the fact is that our term of service and their term of life must both very soon expire."

Let us afresh consecrate ourselves to GOD for this service. Let us unite in faith and love to press forward, forgetting the things that are behind. Let us see to it that we live lives that He can use and bless; that we give, and go, and pray, daily asking from hearts ready for anything He may appoint—"LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?"

"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for CHRIST. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win CHRIST. . . .

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection from the dead.

"Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by CHRIST JESUS. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the upward calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS.

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: *and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, GOD shall reveal even this unto you.*'

NAMES OF THE HUNDRED.

1. Mr. John Brock.
2. Mr. William Russell.
3. Mr. John Darroch.
4. Mr. Erik Folke.
5. *Mr. F. Dymond.*
6. *Mr. S. Pollard.*
7. Miss G. Muir.
8. Miss Stewart (Mrs. C. T. Studd).
9. Miss Thomson.
10. Miss McWatters (Mrs. S. McKee).
11. Miss Burroughes.
12. Miss Britton.
13. Miss Johnson (Mrs. T. Goodall).
14. Miss McQuillan.
15. Miss Gates.
16. Miss J. A. Miller.
17. Miss McKee.
18. Miss Parker.
19. Miss Webber (Mrs. M. Hardman).
20. Miss Groves (Mrs. A. W. Douthwaite).
21. Miss Knight.
22. Miss L. K. Ellis.
23. Mr. Alex. Armstrong, F.E.I.S.
24. Mrs. Armstrong.
25. Miss Scott (Mrs. Orr-Ewing.)
26. Miss Miles (Mrs. H. Broomhall).
27. Miss Judd.
28. Miss Culverwell.
29. Miss Forth.
30. Miss Stewartson (Mrs. T. G. Vanstone).
31. Mr. W. J. Lewis.
32. Mr. A. Hoddle.
33. Mr. J. O. Curnow.
34. Mr A. H. Faers.
35. Mr. I. F. Drysdale.
36. Mr. D. J. Mills.
37. Mr. James Adam.
38. Mr. Arch. Gracie.
39. Mr. Ed. Tomkinson.
40. Mrs. Tomkinson.
41. Miss E. Maud Holme.
42. Miss H. R. Waldie (Mrs. A. Gracie).
43. Miss A. K. Ferriman.
44. Miss S. E. Bastone.

45. Miss A. K. Hook (Mrs. A. H. Faers).
46. Miss Harriet Cutt (Mrs. Smith).
47. Miss Emma Fryer (Mrs. A. Phelps).
48. Mr. H. N. MacGregor.
49 Mr J. A. Stooke.
50. Mrs. Stooke.
51. Mr. A. Ewing.
52. Mr. D. Lawson.
53. Mr. A. H. Huntley.
54. Miss Florence Ellis (Mrs. F. A. Redfern).
55. Miss Clara Ellis.
56. Miss K. Williamson.
57. Miss M. Palmer (Mrs. E Cooper).
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89. Miss Anna Crewdson. (Mrs. M. Walker).
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94. Miss Baker (Mrs. J. Reid).
95. Mr. James Simpson.
96. Mrs. Simpson.
97. Mr. W. E. Shearer.
98. Mr. T. D. Begg.
99. Mr. Thomas Eyres.
100. Mr. O. S. Naestegaard.

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The Story of the C. I. M.

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CONTAINING NAMES OF MISSIONARIES AND STATIONS OF THE CHINA INLAND MISSION AT THE PERIOD CLOSING THIS VOLUME, AND UP TO THE PRESENT YEAR, 1894.

The following publications of the China Inland Mission may be had of Messrs. MORGAN & SCOTT, 12, Paternoster Buildings, London, or from the Secretary, 4, Pyrland Road, London.

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